

**KANT  
AND  
PRE-KANTIAN THEMES**



**Lectures by Wilfrid Sellars**  
**Edited by Pedro Amaral**

RIDGEVIEW PUBLISHING COMPANY

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## Preface

Wilfrid Sellars gave these lectures during 1975 and 1976 as part of a year-long series of seminars on pre-Kantian and Kantian topics: a period in which he balanced the presentation of his own views with studies in the history of philosophy. He had only recently finished "Berkeley and Descartes: Reflections on the 'New Way of Ideas'" and a study of Hume was on its way. The lecture notes have been supplemented with references to his published works when it appeared clear from the context that he had them in mind.

Since these lectures were part of a series of "topics" courses designed to allow graduate students to present papers on special issues, Sellars establishes himself as a "provider of connective tissue" responsible for providing "an overall framework in terms of which we can understand Kant." The lectures do not, therefore, display the integrated and sequential development of ideas that appears in *Science and Metaphysics*. In many respects, this turns out to be a virtue: out of necessity, Sellars must approach each issue from the ground up. As a result, his uncanny ability to strike right at the center of a complex philosophical problem emerges as he spins a web of ideas from sparse beginnings. We are granted immediate access into the most arcane and complex intricacies of Kant's transcendental idealism. Yet, this presents a problem: what happens when the themes of the lectures appear too far apart? Miraculously, Sellars never seems to lose his place. It may take him awhile, through frequent detours into the history of philosophy, but, with an easy elegance, he manages to draw the discussion back to familiar territory time and again. What emerges is an accessible and riveting excursion into the heart of the *Critique*. With diagrams that build from the simplest form to elaborate, layered pictures of the inner workings of the Critical philosophy, Sellars literally lays bare the flows and inner tensions of Kant's thought. Each piece becomes a story in itself; a story that one can pursue through the dialogue of history.

Sellars was a Kantians' Kantian. These lectures were not intended to be exemplars of careful exegesis. They were meant to create Kantians or, failing that, to create a genuine enthusiasm for the Kantian enterprise. They were meant to serve the next great recategorization of the world.

"Kant," Sellars would say, quoting one of his teachers, "is simple. If you read one page, you can write the rest." Lecturing without notes, quoting freely from the *Critique*, while drawing together corners of the philosophical tradition from Plato and Aristotle to Hegel, Husserl, Brentano, Meinong, Russell and Carnap, he produces a cascade of insight. Each element in the tradition adds to a tapestry woven from the fine and simple elements consisting of great moments in the metaphysical dialogue: conceptualism, the way of ideas, rationalism, empiricism.

These lectures typify Sellars' belief that the history of philosophy allows us to carry out a timeless dialogue. Through the history, we learn to communicate

about problems and solutions that arise in a timeless confrontation with the world.

The recurrent themes of Plato's conceptualism, the Cartesian New Way of Ideas and Kant Transcendental Idealism form the vehicle for Sellars' account of the three great recategorizations of the world: the Platonic invention of mind (that provides the seeds for Sellars' own story of verbal behaviorism), the Cartesian recategorization of real qualities by assimilating them into a conceptualist ontology, and the Kantian recategorization of space and time into the framework of conceptualism. Naturally, these are put in service of what Sellars' sees as the final transcription of the commonsense image of the world.

Kant's Metaphysical and Transcendental Deductions are the focal point of the lectures. However, the second edition Refutation of Idealism, the Analogies and the Schematism are mobilized to round out the discussion. Sellars depicts Kant in an ongoing struggle to gain control of his concept of experience. He sees Kant's efforts to harness the doctrine of "self-affection" (often relegated to discussions of the *Opus postumum*) exert its influence in the first and second editions of the *Critique*. In fact, without self-affection and inner sense, a meaningful account of judgment and, consequently, experience, is not possible.

The intricate way in which the lectures give life to the history of philosophy is proof that in the last part of the twentieth century, American Philosophy came into its own. It is not merely the collected works of problem-oriented sharpshooters. In Sellars, American Philosophy finds a systematic spokesman who was as comfortable talking about Peirce, Dewey, James, Hall, Royce, Critical Realism, and Evolutionary Naturalism as he was about Kant and Hegel. This tradition was, and remains, largely oral. The fact that this oral tradition takes its place in the perennial dialogue makes these lectures doubly important. They provide a bridge between past and present with Sellars as guide.

If we are careful, we can see why Sellars believes that history is our common language. Two topics pervade the lectures: time and the perspectival character of experience. For Sellars these are related. In "Time and the World Order," he remarks that when he started to reflect on puzzles about time, he "soon discovered that the 'problem of time' is rivaled only by the 'mind-body problem' in the extent to which it inexorably brings into play all the major concerns of philosophy." The problem of time serves as a touchstone for explaining perceptual knowledge: without taking time into account, an analysis of experience is impossible.

The echoes of Kant's solution to Hume's problems lie close to the surface. For example, in these lectures Sellars stresses Kant's view that experience cannot be accounted for piecemeal: it makes no sense to say that we can have an idea of one isolated object. "You can't understand the connection between 'this is red' and red," Sellars remarks, "unless you see how they function in the world story, and how the world story gets hooked up to actions. It is a mistake to think 'this is red' is related by a simple causal hookup. 'This is red' is a name by virtue of the fact that we can use the world story. The important thing about a world story is that we can use it. We are but pilgrims in a world story. Part of the job of a world story is to

allow us to be where Socrates was. A language must live around a certain focal point, a schematic world story. The world story involves a system of singular statements containing names held in place by a system of statements involving them. Words are not hooked up. The story as a whole is hooked up to the world. The world story is a projection of the world. The world story exists only in a network of inferences. Ultimately, what is known is a key element in how you come to know."

Naturally, even though Kant speaks in ontological terms while Sellars speaks in linguistic terms, one sees the shadow of Kant's transcendental idealism in the idea of a map. Sellars has appropriated Kant's view of the "world story" and put it in post-Wittgensteinian terms: "The Tractarian analysis of predication is the heart of views on ontology. The essential point is to treat predicates as auxiliary symbols which don't have the full blooded semantical role of referring expressions but rather are used to bring it about that referring expressions stand in certain relations." Kant's ontological distinctions get transposed into a form of "social conceptualism" in which ontological categories are understood as classifications of conceptual entities that are, in turn, explained in terms of forms of language: "The crucial issue is the ontology of categories, not "are there horses?". The categories are not object language classifications but metalinguistic functional classifications. 'There are attributes' is metalinguistic and 'There are horses' is object language."

Where Kant regarded concepts as forms of judgment, Sellars takes them to be "forms" pertaining to the metalinguistic entities that constitute the forms of judgment. Indeed, they both agree on the need to "remake" what it is for a thought to be related to an object.

Neither Kant nor Sellars would have us look at the relation between a word and a transcendent object to find its "meaning." As Sellars sees it, the task is to get away from the view that thinks of words as related to objects and progress toward the functional point of view, one according to which the functions are not related to transcendent objects but rather are constitutive of the objects. In other words, the functions define and, at the same time, make up the world story. As we will see in the lectures that follow, Sellars believes that he and Kant share a goal: "We need a legitimate way in which we can say that the universe of discourse has everything in it that could be constructed...this is looking at the world through functional eyes." The transcendental self in itself, as Sellars explains it, begins to see the world through functional eyes.

I owe a great debt to Jeffrey F. Sicha, who served as manuscript editor. His sense of Sellars' views made this excursion into the *Critique* as accessible as it is. Without his help it would not have been possible to capture the oral tradition of American Philosophy that comes alive in Sellars' lectures.

One has to marvel at the patience with which Sellars' answered what must have seemed like pointless questions. Were it possible, I would like to thank him one final time.



## Editorial Introduction

Sellars gave the lectures on Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz and Locke during the fall of 1975. He gave the Kant lectures during the spring and summer of 1976. At the time, Sellars was in the process of rethinking the Rationalist, Empiricist and Kantian traditions. After the appearance of "Berkeley and Descartes: Reflections on the 'New Way of Ideas,'" he was preparing to extend his thoughts to the Empiricist tradition (the work was never completed). The lectures provided a forum within which Sellars could draw upon themes in *Science and Metaphysics*, and a series of papers on Kant: most notably, "This I or he or it (the thing) which thinks," and "Kant's Transcendental Idealism." As was often the case, he wanted to reveal an underlying unity in the philosophical dialogue.

Since I attended an earlier class on Kant, the seminars were a chance to ask key questions left unanswered. Despite what Sellars thought was unnecessary clarification (he would occasionally express surprise to me in private), he answered questions with unwavering humor and artistic flair—some of his more remarkable philosophical pictures occur when he is trying to make sure that a point is just right. No editorial attempt was made to hide the fact that Sellars comes back, sometimes more than once, to points he considers crucial. Though additional questions and class discussion were omitted and even though in the editing some repetition was removed, care was taken to maintain the conversational style of the lectures.

Since simple pictures were drawn first and subsequently embellished (at times over the course of an hour), it was necessary to economize by omitting intervening stages of diagraming. However, between a transcription of the main parts of each lecture and an extensive set of notes, it was possible to reproduce faithfully the lectures. Sellars did not, of course, agree to the publication of these lectures. When I told him that the lectures would be published one day, he laughed softly and said, "you ought to be able to finish my sentences by now." "That's what historians do," I replied.

All chapter divisions, sections and footnotes (except in *APM*), and paragraph numbering are not Sellars' own, but all the figures are his. References to passages in Sellars' work use the abbreviations and numbering in *The Philosophical Works of Wilfrid Sellars* found at the end of this volume. Whenever possible, reference is by paragraph number (or, sometimes, chapter and paragraph number). Page references use the pagination in the specific work mentioned in the reference.



## Chapter 1: Introductory Remarks to the Class

1. Kant's world is very much like everyone else's; it has chairs and tables and dollar bills in it. The categories in terms of which the humdrum features of the world are interpreted: it's the categories which provide those verbal loose ends, those verbal gaps where philosophical insight can get in. Of course Kant is concerned with immortality and is searching for those little places where his categories leave something open which might not be left open on some other interpretation of the categories. So, you should begin your study (and restudy and restudy) of Kant with the idea that what is exciting about Kant is not his picture of the world but the way in which he fits his categories together so that something seems to be possible which doesn't seem to be possible in some other system.

2. Topics: I'm just throwing these out now simply to get your mind loosened up, so that you can think of your own topics. The sort of topic I have in mind that one might concentrate on is: sensation versus intuition. Kant is very clear on this. People fail to grasp this; they fail to notice this. He draws a sharp contrast between intuition and sensation: you want to understand that.

3. Another topic is perception and the objects of perception. The distinction between primary and secondary qualities is very important for Kant as it was for everybody in this period. Things in themselves, of course, are in one sense unknowable for Kant, but in another sense he knows an awful lot about them. He has higher order knowledge of things in themselves: what they must be like if certain features of experience are to be possible. He has knowledge of things in themselves in relation to the possibility of empirical knowledge and in relation to the possibility of ethical knowledge. There is the general contrast between transcendental idealism in the sense in which Kant is an idealist and the sense in which he insists that he is not an idealist. There are concepts pertaining to truth: the distinction between the meaning of truth, the criterion of truth. How much of the *Critique* is devoted to the criterion of truth? There is the whole problem of self-awareness and apperception. What is the "deduction of the categories?" (The words 'deduction', 'natural deduction', 'deductive systems' and so on.) What does Kant really mean by the 'deduction of the categories'? One can contrast Kant with Leibniz, Kant with Locke, Kant with Berkeley.

4. One can explore possible experience. Possible experience might be understood in terms of the conditions of anything which might count as

experience: in other words, necessary features of anything that might count as experience. Or it could mean an obtainable experience, an experience which *might* exist and, in some definite sense, is there to be gotten if certain moves are made.

5. One of the most interesting topics a person might want to work on is the relation of certain features of Kant's thought to the corresponding features of Leibniz's thought. It isn't often stressed as much as it should be: Kant was really affected by Leibniz, the real Leibniz, not just the mythical Leibniz, the Hoffman tradition. In 1766, the real Leibniz took on a new meaning, a different dimension of meaning for Kant's thought. It used to be very fashionable to argue over what is the real difference between Kant's idealism and Berkeley's idealism, give or take a few necessities. Now one might try and say: what is the difference between Kant and Leibniz give or take a few arguments, a few distinctions? There is a little more to that, I think. Kant is an idealist far removed from the sense in which Berkeley is an idealist. But the sense in which there are idealistic themes in Kant is much closer to Leibniz than the sense in which there are idealistic themes in Berkeley.

6. Now I suppose that if there is any central theme in idealism, it is ontology, as opposed to rationalism and coherence which are unrealistically, or misguidedly, connected with the term 'idealism'. In fact, 19th century idealism was far more rationalistic than it was idealistic. But that is a topic in its own right. If there is one ontological theme that is central to idealism, it is that we must draw a contrast between minds and that which exists for minds. Somehow, mind doesn't exist for mind—except in the epistemological sense in which mind can know minds. But I'm talking about existing *for* mind, that which depends for its existence on mind. Mind exists for itself, but it also exists *in itself*. Other things exist for mind. In traditional terms, this had a very definite meaning which gradually became less definite. Any nice distinction which you draw, when you really start to work with it, begins to grow.

## Chapter 2: Adverbial Theories of Sensing

1. I am not going to go through the whole machinery of acts and contents. What I want to do, however, is say enough about it to emphasize, right from the beginning, certain key themes that Kant took for granted, along with the whole period in which he worked, and that confronted him with a real problem.

2. Let's take for granted that there are things in themselves. A thing in itself, in the broadest sense, is simply something that doesn't depend for its existence upon being thought of. Putting it in a counterfactual: it would exist even if nobody ever thought of it. It would exist even if God didn't think of it—except we have this peculiar theme of God as a creator so that things might have a causal dependence on God. But we're talking about a different kind of dependence: not about causal dependence. When we draw a distinction between those things that depend for their existence on thought, and those that don't, we don't mean that they causally depend on God because anything that God creates is causally dependent on God's thought. We mean a much more delicate notion of dependence which is other than causal dependence.

3. I can illustrate this best, perhaps, by coming to a contemporary theme. Suppose we are contemporary Cartesians and we hold an adverbial theory of the objects of sensation. So that here (Figure 1) is a mind and it is sensing: we have an act of sensing.

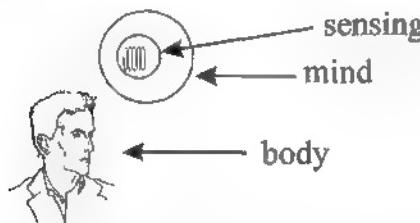
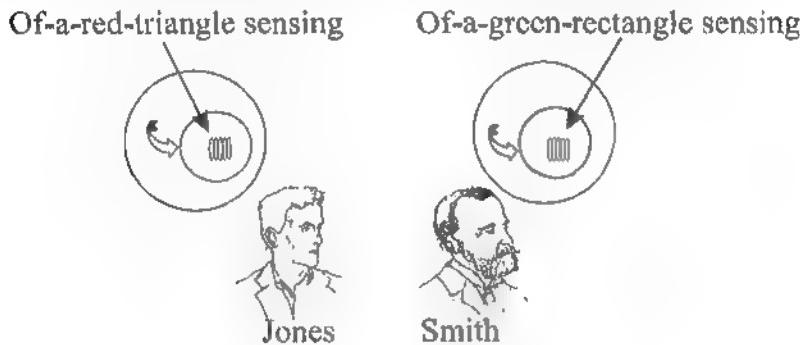


Figure 1

4. For philosophers who develop an adverbial theory of the objects of sensation, there is an act of sensing and that act of sensing is a sensing in a certain manner, as it is sometimes put. That's tricky because it suggests adverbs of manner such as 'quickly', 'slowly', 'happily', 'gaily', 'lightly', 'skippingly', and so on. So one speaks of manners of sensing. Or, we can

speak of kinds of sensing which is an extension of the use of 'kind' that derives from "kind of thing" like "horse," "cow" and so on. You might say "variety." 'Variety' is one of those nice words that has enough free play in it so that philosophers can make use of it. So we have *variety*.

5. Here's (Figure 2) another mind (Jones) and an act of sensing. Suppose that I am sensing in a certain way or manner: I'm sensing a-red-triangularly; I'm sensing in an of-a-red-triangle manner. Now one way of expressing this is to say: well, this sensing is of a certain variety. It is an of-a-red kind of sensing. This is Smith (Figure 2). And we have here a sensing of a different variety, a sensing of a green rectangle: a green-rectangle sensing. So, according to the picture given, we have two acts of sensing which have in common the generic act of sensing, but they are different varieties of the act. We might just leave it at that. There are varieties of sensing; we can ontologize ultimately in terms of varieties.



**Figure 2**

6. Today we are talking in this kind of Cartesian way about varieties of sensing: of-a-red-triangle sensing and of-a-green-rectangle sensing. We wouldn't want to say that in the mind there is a red triangle. After all, a good Cartesian mind just doesn't have any room for geometrical characteristics; so, there is no red triangle in the mind, there is no green rectangle in the mind. There are just two different varieties of sensing.

7. We have two varieties of sensing: the of-a-red triangle sensing and of-a-green-rectangle sensing. Different people can have sensings of those varieties. So far so good. An important feature of this is that Jones is sensing in a way which is an of-a-red-triangle sensing, but that doesn't imply that there is a red triangle. The context is an intensional one: that

Jones has a red-triangle sensing doesn't imply that there is a red triangle.  
You can't make an existential move. It's an opaque context.

8. Although we're getting sophisticated about how to develop an adverbial theory, or a variety of sensing theory, of the objects of sensing, this was not characteristically true of the history of philosophy.<sup>1</sup> Instead there was a different picture that arose. We will look at this other way of picturing it.<sup>2</sup> The traditional way of looking at this was in terms of a different picture. I mean by 'picture' literally picture because as Wittgenstein correctly emphasizes philosophers of different persuasions are hypnotized by different pictures: literally pictures, little diagrams they draw on the margins of their pages even if they don't get into the heart of the text. But you can read a philosopher's work and pretty soon you can illustrate it. I've always been very candid. You can illustrate what I say because I provide the illustrations.

<sup>1</sup> Sellars refers to the turn of the seventeenth century debate about the ontological status of "cognitive" acts and their objects. One, committed to "varieties" of cognition, is the remote ancestor of adverbial theories (and the early phenomenological tradition), while the other (that he turns to) evolves into the Cartesian Theater.

<sup>2</sup> That is, not in a strictly adverbial theory or a variety of sensing model but in an "act-content" approach. The act-content model, broadly construed as a relational model (i.e., thought *intends* object), is a centerpiece of Sellars analysis of conceptualism in the Platonic tradition of theories of mind. As Sellars will argue, part of Kant's program is to replace the relational model with a non-relational formulation that regards the relation of thought to its object in terms of the transcendental characteristics of the synthetic activity of the thinking itself. Kant will reinterpret the conceptualist's model of the relation of thought to its object so that the relation is explicable solely in terms of the unity of representings. As Kant remarks in A108 and A110, the consciousness of the identity of the self is at the same time a consciousness of the necessary unity of the synthesis of appearances and "in relation to an object" is the unity of consciousness and, consequently, the synthesis of the manifold. See, for example, "Physical Realism," part II, in *PPME* (102), for a discussion of the immanent acts. Sellars offers some commentary on these approaches in the first part of the Carus lectures (110).



## Chapter 3: Act-Content

### A. Sensing as a relation

1. Next is the classical way of looking at it: act-content. Instead of an of-a-red-triangle sensing (a variety, or manner), now we have a sensing of a red triangle (an act/content) (Figure 1).

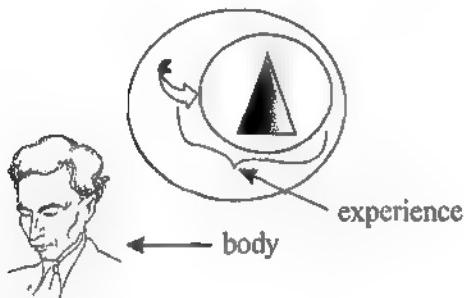


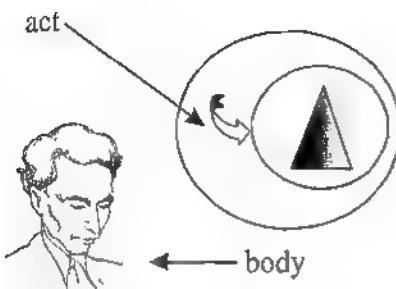
Figure 1

2. The 'of' is taken not as a subjective genitive involving a classification.<sup>1</sup> The 'of' is taken as a relational word. So in this case there is an act which stood in a relation to a red triangle while in the preceding case, we find an of-a-red-triangle sensing.

3. And again I'm drawing a large scale distinction because, as we'll see when we get down to the nitty gritty, I'm not talking about Kant here. I'm just talking about pictures because, as we'll see, Kant was very careful—as was Descartes—to distinguish between sensing and perception. This involves a delicate problem as to how space and color get together in experience.

4. So, here is an act (Figure 2).

<sup>1</sup> A likely source of the grammatical classification for Sellars' *fits* is Sellars' *pere*: see p. 435 of Roy Wood Sellars, *The Philosophy of Physical Realism* (New York, 1932). That Sellars was familiar with his father's use of this phrase is without doubt since he refers to it on p. 277 of DKMB (88).



**Figure 2**

Instead of construing this as an act of a certain kind, it is construed as an act having a certain kind of content. An of-a-red-triangle sensing becomes an act which has, as its content, a red triangle.

5. Still, the important thing to note (just as in the previous case) is that from the fact that there is a red triangle sensing, it doesn't follow that there is a triangle; from the fact that there is a green rectangle sensing, it doesn't follow that there is a rectangle. We talk about this in intensional terms. From the sensation which has one particular kind of object (a triangle), it doesn't follow that there really is a triangle; nor, from the sensing of another particular kind of object (a rectangle) does it follow that there is a rectangle.

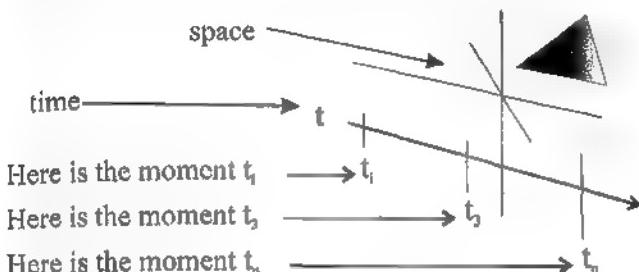
### *Read ~~can give~~ B. Two kinds of being*

*Can give  
an account  
of sens  
distinction  
in terms  
of reality  
and reality*

6. So here we find a different picture. This way of looking at the situation, then, construes it as follows: instead of as kinds of sensing, mental acts are construed as having certain peculiar kinds of objects, objects which, in a certain sense, are not real, but have status. As I so often put it, they have "second class existence." "First class existence" and "second class existence," that is the whole key to the epistemology of this period. The idea is that, in a certain sense, when you are sensing a red triangle, the word 'of' stands for a certain relation between the act and a certain object. 'Of' is a relational word. And, in a certain sense, there is a red triangle, but there is not *really* a red triangle.

7. We are looking at this in terms of an act-object model, but the word 'content' is also appropriate, because the content is dependent upon the act. "No act without a content." You can't have a sensing which is just a

sensing; it has some object, a red triangle, a green rectangle, a pink elephant shape and so on. In that sense, there is a lot of dependence of the content upon the act. But, nevertheless, triangles, according to the Cartesian (the literal Cartesian) could also exist independently, e.g., in the world of space and time. Here (Figure 3) is a triangle:

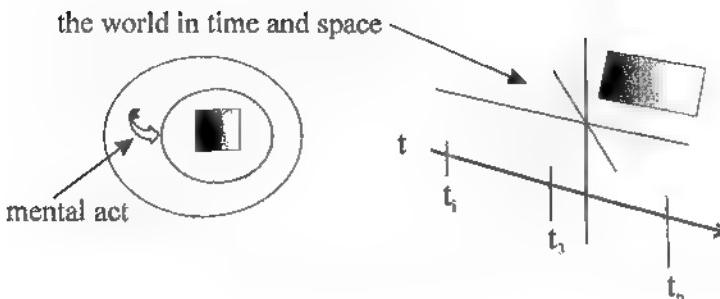


**Figure 3**

8. For reasons we will explore later, red in the aesthetically interesting sense does not exist in the spatial, temporal world, but triangles can because physics and mechanics need them. So, the idea, very simply, is that there are two modes of being which shape can have. Shape can have that “second class” mode of being where it is dependent on the act of representing, and it can also have that mode of being that is independent of being represented—although, as I said, God might have represented it and created it.

9. Naturally, a correspondence theory of experience grew out of this. But it is also a correspondence theory which can be formulated as a two “forms of being” theory.

10. There are two modes of being which a triangle can have: it can have a being which is dependent upon a mental act and it can have a being which is not dependent on a mental act. This distinction of what depends on a mental act for the very hold it has on reality and that which doesn’t is vital. There can be a rectangle in a certain space and time. Here (Figure 4) is a rectangle which exists in its own right: belonging to the world as a part of the spatial-temporal order. But, then, in addition, we would find this peculiar kind of dependence whereby this content, or object, is dependent for its being on the act of representing it.



**Figure 4**

11. Leave aside color for the moment. Shape can have two modes of being: one of which is simply as represented, dependent for its being upon being represented, and another mode of being where it doesn't. What I want to say is that this is the picture we have to understand, in terms of which we have to read Kant.<sup>2</sup>

#### *C. A correspondence between adverbial and act-content accounts*

12. We can see a structural similarity between what we have here (Figure 4) and what we had earlier, in a more contemporary formulation of the Cartesian position. We had varieties of sensing, an of-a-red-triangle sensing and an of-a-green-rectangle sensing and, in the present case, a rectangle or a triangle which actually exist in space. What we now talk about, as the contrast between the dependence of a certain kind of object on the very act of sensing and something existing independently of the act, appeared earlier as the difference between

a triangle (rectangle) occurring merely as an element of a description of a mental act of sensing, and

a triangle (rectangle) existing independently in the world.

13. One of the crucial distinctions is the distinction between the sensory and the perceptual. We'll see how that fits in later on; right now,

<sup>2</sup>Sellars develops second class existence and the domain of representables into an explanation of the way in which Kant treats of judging as the coherence of representables.

I just want to show you how different pictures guide philosophers and now the act-content model is the picture.

14. "Content" as content is something that is dependent on the act of representing. Its esse is being represented. The esse of this triangle (Figure 5) is being represented:

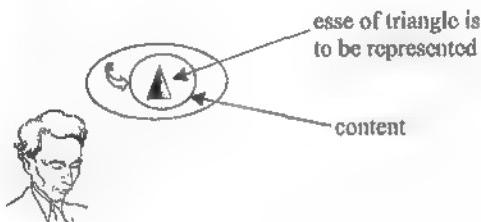


Figure 5

The esse of this triangle (Figure 6) is not being represented:

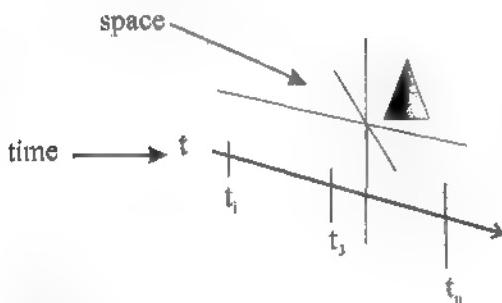


Figure 6

So there are two kinds of esse's you might say. There is that kind of esse in which the esse of something is being represented and there is that kind of esse whose esse is not a matter of being represented. In the preceding case (Figure 6), we would have something whose esse is not constituted by its being represented. The important thing for the Cartesian is that shape, at least, can have both kinds of esse. It can have esse which is dependent on being represented, and it can have esse which is not dependent on being represented.

15. Let us deal with the following question: Why are there two pictures, two pictures of the same thing? A picture is a picture. Take a camera and take a snapshot and then another. Are there two different

pictures? The important thing about these pictures is the commentary that goes along with them. A metaphor is a metaphor. Jones uses one metaphor, Smith uses another; but it all comes to the same thing. Well, o.k., but still they are two different metaphors. And if you think metaphors in philosophy can't have important consequences in the way that problems are elaborated...I don't think that we disagree here.

#### D. Cheshire-cat relations and act-content

16. All I've done, so far, is to make a grammatical point. In one case, we have an of-a-red-triangle sensing, the phrase "of a red triangle" construed as a sortal modifying the verbal noun 'sense'. The other gives us a relational picture. Now it is an illusory relational picture because, obviously, there are hard-nosed relations where we want to say that the terms of the relation are on par. I kick the table: there is the kicking; me, the kicker; the table, the "kickee." The table is confronting me as equal. It doesn't depend on me; the table would exist whether I kicked it or not.

17. Do you know why the relational model of thinking broke down? I can think of Nixon: here's me, there's Nixon. Nixon doesn't depend on me; I don't depend on Nixon. So, when I think of Nixon, that is like me kicking the table. But then I think of Pegasus.... Today, we have sophisticated theories of how we can think what is not. I don't mean to rehearse that old story here. But you see, the original problem was to look for thinker, thinking, thought, just as you have kicker, kicking, kickee. And that broke down. But we preserve it. How do we preserve it? Well, you say, when you think of Pegasus, there isn't a real Pegasus, but obviously I'm not thinking of nothing; so there must be a Pegasus somewhere. You know the old story going back to Plato.<sup>3</sup>

18. The act-content account is the cheshire-cat form of the relational model. The important relation is some kind of relation obtaining between the act of representing and what might be called (it's useful to use the term and this is where the term arose) the "immanent object," rather than the "transcendent object." Later, you could say that physical triangles can be transcendent objects of representation, but every representation has its immanent object, which is ontologically dependent on it.

19. So our intuitions are correct: we can take many of the distinctions we draw in the act-content theory and map them into an adverbial theory.

<sup>3</sup>The "story" to which he refers appears in *ME* (116), see, for example, *ME*, p. 13.

I'll show how we can do this at the level of conception, later on. But for the moment, I'm starting off with something I think is familiar to you, namely, the adverbial theory of sensing, and showing that what are construed on the adverbial theory as kinds, or varieties, of sensing are construed, on the cheshire-catish version of the relational model, as a matter of a relation between an act and an immanent object. You are to regard this way of picturing it as a "ghost" of the relational theory. We have the kicker, kickee, and the kicking, but, when you think of something, there is something that is dependent on your very act of "kicking," if I so might speak. That is the very idea of this theme. The content would be something which depends on the act of thinking.

20. In a certain sense, obviously, when you say that an act of sensing is of a certain kind, you want to say there can be a difference between two acts. Well, they are of different kinds. O.k. One is of-a-red-triangle kind and one is of-a-green-triangle kind, and then you are just left with that. People who work with the adverbial theory want, in some sense, to get a triangle in sensing, you see. There is where the philosophical dialectic starts to work on the adverbial theory because it is not satisfactory just to say that you have primitives like an "of-a-red-triangle sensing," "of-a-green-rectangle sensing," "of-a-blue-circle sensing" and so on. We want to understand that; it needs to be elaborated and it usually hasn't been.

21. Indeed, the same picture can be applied with conceptual intention. For example, we might, today, take an adverbial theory of the objects of thought.



## Chapter 4: Thinking and Representables

### *A. An adverbial account of thinking*

1. Here (Figure 1) we see an act of thinking: here is Jones; here is Smith. Jones is thinking that Socrates is wise; Smith is thinking that Protagoras is wise.

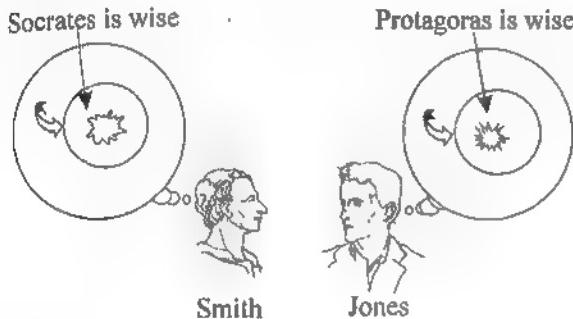
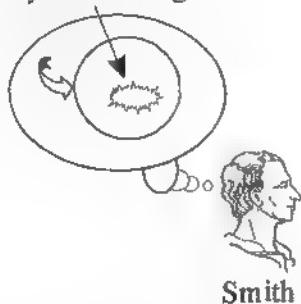


Figure 1

2. As a straightforward extension of the relational model, you can cook up things to be objects of these acts: you know, propositions in the Russell-Moore sense. There can be different people who have thoughts of that same variety. You see that's one of the nice things about this. The minute you make the so-called "of-ness" of thought a matter of so-called propositional objects ('object' is one of those accordion words which philosophers keep up a tune with), you can have intersubjectivity.

3. But we might say that the correct way of understanding the relational thought to its object (at this level at least) is to construe this as an act of thinking of the that-Socrates-is-wise kind (or variety), and we would also have a that-Protagoras-is-wise variety (Figure 2). Naturally, Socrates does not come into the act any more than the triangle does in the adverbial theory of sensing. If you develop an adverbial theory of the objects of thought, you will, ultimately, get some connection to the ways of "thinking of the world" (i.e., the domain of truth). That may be a long and roundabout story.

that-Socrates-is-wise variety of thinking



that-Protagoras-is-wise variety of thinking

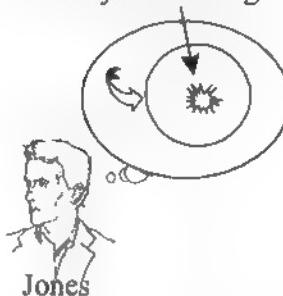


Figure 2

4. Here is Robert (Figure 3) and Robert also thinks that Socrates is wise: he has a thought of the Socrates-is-wise variety. So you have varieties of thinking. We wouldn't, then, construe propositional thinking in terms of the kicking model. As though there were Robert and a thinking and an object which he is mentally kicking around (I was kicking around the idea...). Today we are working into an adverbial theory of the objects of propositional thinking—of course, that wasn't the way of doing it in the Cartesian period.

that-Socrates-is-wise variety of thinking

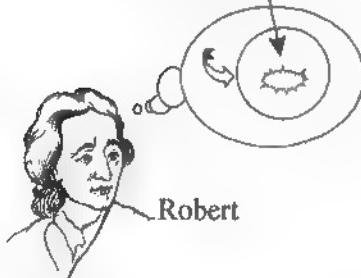


Figure 3

5. Let me just warn you that the great development of philosophy and logic of the high middle ages was thrown away in the scrap heap of history with the scientific revolution. All these beautiful philosophical, logical distinctions were thrown away. And in a certain sense, we have to start over again. But again, what we find in this period... I hesitate to say how crude

it was after the Cartesian period...philosophy became sophisticated again in its own way. As I said, the Scholastics had a keen sense of logical form in the philosophy of logic and that disappeared. It wasn't until the Kantian period that something like the subtleties of Ockham were rediscovered. Look at Kant as somebody who rediscovered the logic of the high scholastics.

6. Ultimately any adverbial theory, if you will, of the objects of propositional thinking must explain how thoughts of the that-Socrates-is-wise kind get hooked up with good old Socrates. Here is space-time, Athens, Socrates:

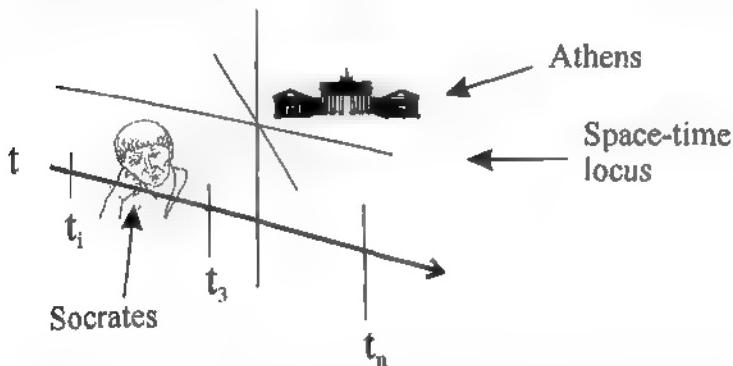


Figure 4

In some way, some explanation must be given as to how this account gets hooked up with Socrates. However, that is not what we are concerned with for the moment. All I want to do is show you that this wasn't the picture which dominated the period which we are concerned with. Instead of construing propositional thinking so that the object becomes a variety of thinking, what we get again is a cheshire-cat version of the object of the kicking relation.

#### B. A cheshire-cat relational account

7. There is an act of thinking that Socrates is wise. There is an entity which is, somehow, the idea that Socrates is wise. And this is regarded as an immanent object—as we showed on the act-content model of sensing. We have, then, an act and a propositional content which depends for its being on that act. The being of that content is its “being represented.” You might say that “second class” being is being *as* represented.

8. Now, what corresponds to that in the spatial and temporal world, that is another matter. Once again, there is a distinction drawn. There is that which has being as being represented, the *esse* of which is being as represented: which corresponds to Berkeley's notion of the *esse est percipi*. Then there is Socrates (Figure 4). What we are going to get is a fact—the fact that Socrates is wise. What I want to emphasize, again, is the act-immanent object notion.

9. When we have two people—that's where the problem begins to arise—two people can think that Socrates is wise. The adverbial theory construes this as two acts of the same variety, the Socrates-is-wise variety. But now we are construing it on the relational model in terms of an immediate object which has second class status. Now o.k.: there's intention here. On the adverbial theory, there is a domain of sensing, ways of judging and so on and there seems to be no problem as to how two people can think or sense the same thing. Thinking the same thing, sensing the same thing is simply thinking (sensing) of the same variety. So that's unproblematic until further on when problems raise themselves.

*But then  
we have  
a question  
about  
tokens  
instantiating  
stuff*

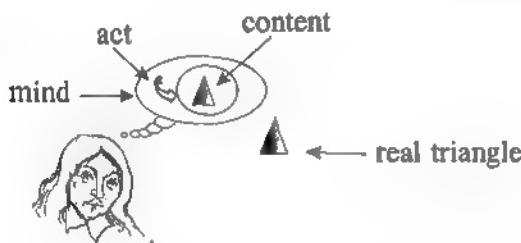


Figure 5

10. But on this position (act-content), we have that which depends for its being on being represented and that which doesn't. For example, here (Figure 5) is the representing of a triangle and here is a real triangle. This real triangle is not in the mind; when you represent a triangle, there is no triangle bumping around in your mind. You have to work with that fundamental Cartesian theme. Triangles do not exist in the mind; they are not modifications of the mind; they exist in the mind only by virtue of being represented. What you do is, very carefully, say that the represented triangle depends for its very being on the act of representing it. And then, we are

confronted with the fact that two different people (Figure 6) can (as we would naturally say) represent the same triangle.

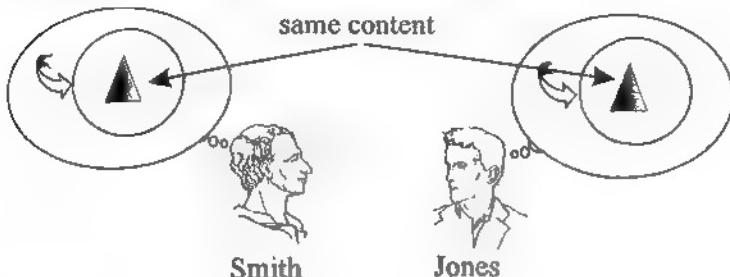


Figure 6

It is at this point that there is a picture here for intersubjectivity.

### C. Intersubjectivity and representables

11. You start out by saying that there are second class beings which depend for their existence on being represented and then you start reasoning—of course, you start reasoning or you will be in trouble. What you do is generalize this notion and say, “Well, in a certain sense, there must be a domain of representables, qua representables, and among them is, for example, a triangle.”<sup>31</sup>

<sup>31</sup>In §19 of the B Deduction and in the Second Analogy, Kant will, according to Sellars, develop the idea of the domain of representables into the core of the transcendental idealism, that is, the objective unity of apperception. Sellars uses the ideas of second class existence and the domain of representables as an apparatus for confronting transcendental idealism, the key intuition of which he takes to be the existence of an intersubjective domain of representables. For Kant, the physical world is a domain of representables constituted through the judgments that, ultimately, coalesce within the objective unity of apperception. The latter is a special mode of transcendental unity of apperception. Sellars carefully builds the startling view that this consciousness (in the unity of apperception) develops out of the tradition described here and shares similar functions. Sellars emphasizes B133 (“this thoroughgoing identity” to the end of the paragraph) Thus, in judging that Socrates is wise, I am claiming that the contents (the representables Socrates and wisdom) belong together not merely by association (*ad Hume*) but objectively: they belong together independently of my individuality. That is, they belong together as possible experiences, as representables. Sellars sees judgments as principles that concern the coherence of representables and he explains how Kant’s view is the fruition of a long struggle within the Platonic tradition to define the intelligible order. The representables that constitute our experience of objects (the “chosen ones” as Sellars quips) concern a drawing together of items that are essentially representable. They become part of reality by being actually represented. This is Kant’s idealism.

representables = intentional objects  
i.e. objects whose esse est percipi

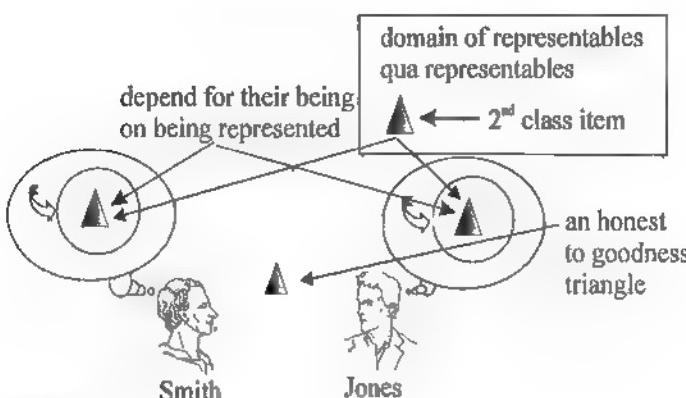


Figure 7

12. Here are Jones and Smith (Figure 7): they are representing the same thing. What we are developing is the doctrine of representables *qua* representables in the history of philosophy. Second class items. Here (Figure 7) we find a domain of second class items, because they are not really triangles, but they are no longer private. We started out by saying, "When Jones represents a triangle, the triangle he represents is dependent on the act of representing," and now we say, "Here is Smith, and he can represent the same thing." We get a domain of representables, second class entities which have being *qua* representable.

13. Usually this domain of representables was put in the mind of God; so, God was the supreme "representer." God represents everything. Malebranche said, "You know, if it weren't for the Bible, which talks about physical objects being created and that sort of thing...well, all we would need is God and the things he represents, and he might lead us to represent some things"—a nice Berkeleyan position. People are not far wrong when they say that in many respects, Berkeley's philosophy is very Malebranchean. And people accused Kant of being a Berkeleyan and he used to scream "No!" and people accused Berkeley of being a Malebranchean and he used to scream "No!". Well, people scream and holler like that because it just unnerves them inside.

14. The same thing holds in the case of propositional thinking. Two people can think that Socrates is wise and what we have then is a domain of propositional representables. And here (Figure 8) is the representable that Socrates is wise and somehow that would be represented by both Jones and Smith.

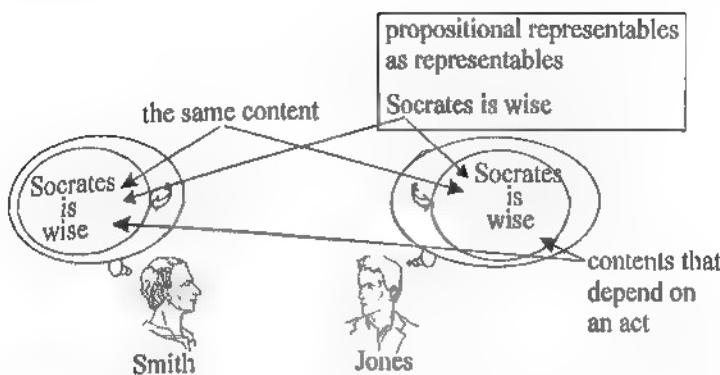


Figure 8

15. One of the sad features, as I said, of the Cartesian period was that the sense of propositional form was lost. That will be very important when we come to the theme of Kant's categories and his theory of judgment and so on. But, again, I'm giving you some of the framework in terms of which to understand the ontological picture that was involved.

16. In the adverbial theory, one would say there is the Socrates-is-wise variety and people can have thinkings of that variety and there is the Protagoras-is-wise variety of thinking and people have thinkings of that variety. Then you think, "What is the ontological status of these ways of thinking?" The general tendency is to say that when one represents that Socrates is wise, there is something represented. But, what about the case of false belief?

17. Suppose you represent that Socrates is foolish (Figure 9).

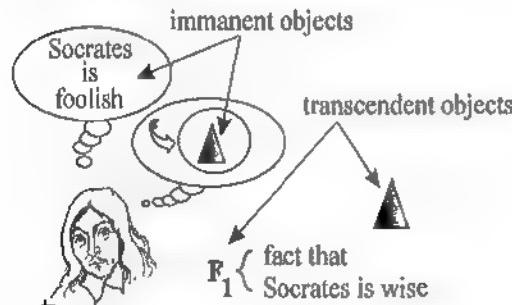


Figure 9

The world does not contain the fact that Socrates is foolish (whatever a fact is), but there would still be the representable "Socrates is foolish." But now,

as I said, these representables, *as representables*, exist in the understanding of God: this can evolve into Leibniz's theory of God's continuous representation of all possible worlds. I'm not concerned with that here. However, what I am concerned with is that kindred notion of a second-class reality.<sup>2</sup> You know, this has evolved into contemporary semantics as *senses*, *senses* versus mental statements, but it has its roots back here.

18. Most philosophers of this period, as you know, wrote Robinson Crusoe theories of knowledge.<sup>3</sup> They did not really think out the problem of intersubjectivity. Still, we might indicate the type of thing they might say if they had faced up to the problem of intersubjectivity. Of course, the same thing arises with respect to even one person. For example, I can think the same thing yesterday, today, and tomorrow. It's not just a matter of intersubjectivity. It seems we have a tension between saying that the very *esse* of this entity is to be represented and then, realizing, "Aha! But it transcends any particular act of representing!" What is this "being" transcending any particular act of representing? Well, you always encounter the silence of ignorance in response to this point.

19. So, we get the notion of a "sum of representables" which are second class entities that are *available* to be dependent features of thought, to be, that is, dependent objects, objects of acts of representing. Now we can map this over here. We have here (Figure 8) the domain of propositional representables as representables; these ways of representing are homeless children unless something represents them. So, we have a kind of "second class" status for them already.

20. We come back to the question: "what is the real difference?" The real difference is in the mind of the philosopher who elaborates the metaphor because to do philosophy is to pile metaphor upon metaphor; like building a house with cards. You build a house of metaphors, and gradually, it stays and stays, until it persists. Furthermore, it turns into technical terminology when the original "metaphors" are lost. The terminology looks as if it has a kind of permanence. Take 'inherence', for example. It appears to belong in a theory, until someone, like Berkeley, comes along, and thinks, "inherence?" "inherence?" "What? Accidents inhere?" Somebody looks at these metaphors—which have the appearance of a purely dependent,

<sup>2</sup> Sellars identifies what the scholastics called the *esse* of the *esse objectivum* (the reality of objective reality), the *esse objectivum* (the objective reality, or "sense"), and the formal concept ("idea" in Descartes' usage, referred to here as the "mental statement," i.e., the *verbum mentis*).

<sup>3</sup> *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe, a children's classic. Robinson Crusoe gets shipwrecked on a deserted island with no provisions and has to triumph over the elements to save himself during his long isolation. Sellars' favorite label for theories that fail to build in intersubjectivity.

theoretical system of technical terms—and yells “the emperor has no clothes!”

#### D. Representables and Kant's idealism

21. This is the key. What I've given is the key to Kant's idealism, because Kant believed, like Berkeley, that the world of appearance depends for its being on being known. And since “know” is a success word, an achievement word, it follows that it is a “we can't know what isn't so” kind of word. But Kant used the word ‘Erkenntnis’ in a neutral kind of way, in such a way that he means by *Erkenntnis* what we might call a knowledge claim today, or a knowledge presumption. But anyway, Kant argues, especially in the first edition, that the world of appearance depends on being known and that means, upon being represented—its esse is “representative being.” And the foundation for that comes back to the notion that the esse of something is being represented.

X .  
Know .  
rat  
ther  
know

22. In the second edition, and in parts of the first edition, he makes much more of this, lays much more stress on the notion of representables. Clearly, there is, in some sense, an objective domain of representables. However, Kant doesn't put them in the mind of God; he just says there must be this objective domain, if there is to be objective knowledge. Thus, God doesn't play, directly at least, in Kant's philosophy, the role that he does in Malebranche's.

23. Furthermore, I've been saying that Cartesians hold that, there are two modes of being that a triangle can have. Well, here's (Figure 10) this honest to goodness first class mode of being, a triangle in physical space, and then there is the mode of being wherein it can depend on being represented.

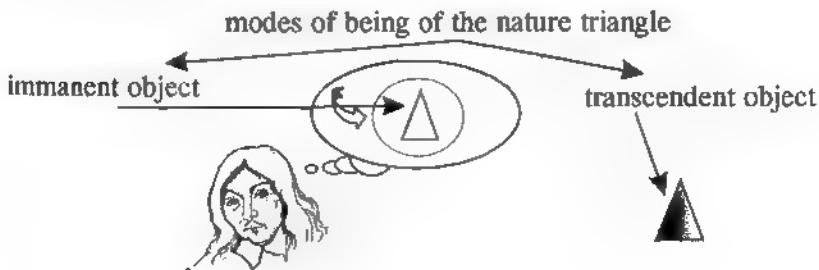


Figure 10

As simply a representable, it occurs as something represented. Now, of course, the word 'representable' is a dangerous word because, in a way, we can represent the actual triangle.

24. What we are dealing with here is a very limited sense of 'representable' which I will call the "immanent representable". In Descartes, we distinguish between the immanent object of experience and the transcendent object. A triangle as an immanent object has this ontological tie to the act of representing. In addition, we have, then, the actual triangle, which may have been created by God or even a carpenter, and is, at least, causally dependent on mind, but not in the unique, remarkable way that the immanent object depends on the act of representing. We call the ones the immanent objects of experience and the others the transcendent objects of experience.

25. What we have here, in the case of immanent objects, is the domain of items which are candidates for being transcendent objects. Then, the fundamental relation between immanent objects and transcendent objects is that of correspondence: in some very metaphorical sense of the word 'correspondence'. Paul Weiss could explicate it by saying one and the same item may be a triangle: it has one mode of being here (on the left) and one mode of being here (on the right) (Figure 10). But the word "correspondence" is a nice, relaxing metaphor. Notwithstanding, he uses that language because he wants to say that, on the one hand, a triangle has second class being as an immanent object of an act of representing, and on the other, it has being as an independent being, a transcendent object of a certain representational experience.

26. Now, the same thing holds below (Figure 11). Here is a state of affairs, Socrates' being wise ('F<sub>1</sub>'), that has transcendent being, and then here, on the left, it has a status in the understanding involving possible immanent objects of representation. We must take that seriously. We take the fact being in a certain point in space and time, the fact that Socrates is wise, as a transcendent object of a certain representational experience.

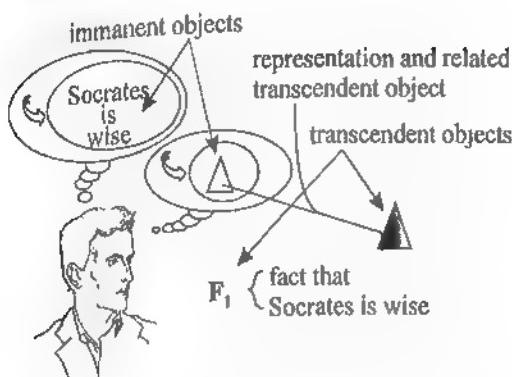
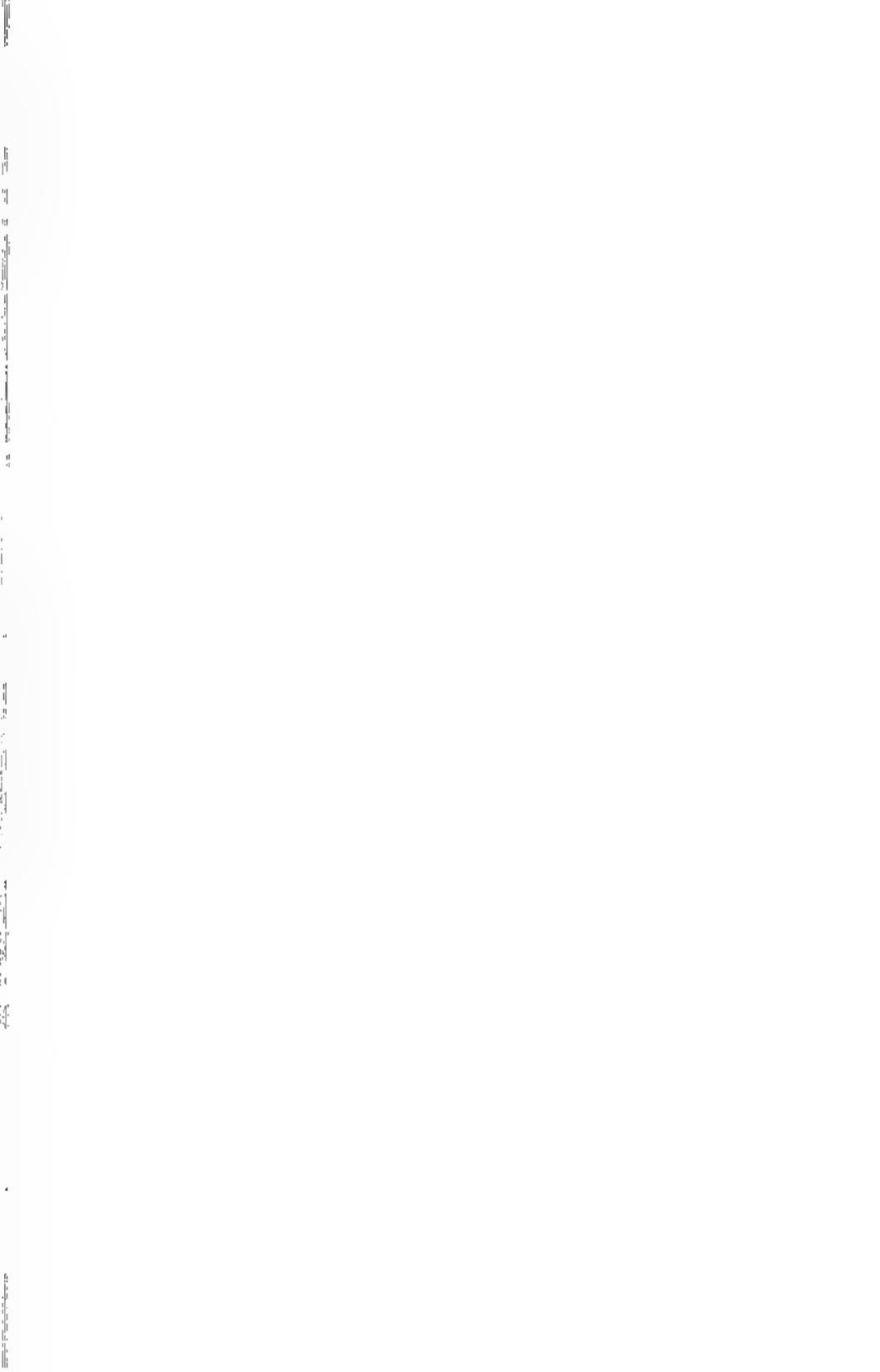


Figure 11

27. Now, when we note that Kant is an idealist with respect to the world of appearance, the spatial-temporal world, what he wants to say is that the only kind of being that anything spatiotemporal has is this second class kind of being, which consists in either being actually represented or being representable as representable. That thesis—a very simple one—means that Kant simply denies that anything in space and time—space and time or anything in them—has any other being than as a content or as a potential content of a mental act of representation.



## Chapter 5: More on Transcendental Idealism

### A. "ing" versus "ed"

1. I call your attention to a passage in the *Paralogisms*, in the first edition (A375):

We must give full credence to this paradoxical but correct proposition, that there is nothing in space save what is represented in it. For space is itself nothing but representation, and whatever is in it must therefore be contained in the representation. *Nothing whatsoever is in space, save in so far as it is actually represented in it.* [emphasis, ws.]

Here he is laying his cards on the table! He is abstracting from all of these niceties I've brought in about representables and so on, and he says: "Nothing whatsoever is in space save in so far as it is actually represented in it." Now, get the *next* sentence:

It is a proposition which must indeed sound strange, that a thing can exist only in the representation of it, but in this case the objection falls, inasmuch as the things with which we are here concerned are not things in themselves, but appearances only, that is, representations.

Now that is a very important passage because Kant is quite clear there and because it also elaborates another theme.

2. We are careful today to distinguish between "-ings" and "-eds." Like a "representing" and a "represented." When we use the word "representation," we say "Aha! Do we mean representation as *act* or representation as *object*?" Do we mean "representation" as *immediate (immanent) object*? Well, Kant is very insensitive to this. In the German, 'Vorstellung' has the same ambiguity. 'Vorstellung' can either be something "vorgestellt" or "vorstellen." We have a represented and a representing.

3. Let's look at that passage again:

We must give full credence to this paradoxical but correct proposition, that there is nothing in space save what is represented in it. For space is itself nothing but representation....

that is, something essentially *represented*, something whose *being* is to be represented, something the *esse* of which is to be represented.

### *B. Space as a represented*

#### 4.

For space is itself nothing but representation....

Here, he doesn't mean that space is an *act* of representing. All I'm saying is that this is the picture: it is nothing but a represented, something which we get only as an immanent object of representing. And whatever is in space, i.e., is contained in that immanent object of representing, must itself be an immanent object of representing.

Nothing whatsoever is in space, save in so far as it is actually represented in it....

Though modified in other contexts, it seems absurd to bring in here, as I said, possible representings in addition to actual representing.

It is a proposition which must indeed sound strange, that a thing can exist only in the representation of it...,

but, of course, Kant goes on to say, that is the whole point of the distinction between appearances and things in themselves. The crux between appearances and things in themselves is, for Kant, that the *esse* of appearance is the *esse* of which is to be represented: it is to be mind dependent in this very classical, and very straightforward, way.

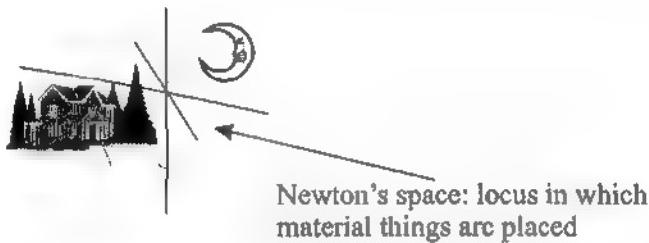
5. Now let me highlight this point by taking space and saying what Kant's theory of space is. We'll have to look at arguments of course, but now I'll give you the results of the arguments.

6. The Cartesian notion of actuality is what Kant means by 'an sich', "in itself." What Kant does is give new meaning to the word 'actuality'. We distinguish between the actual and the merely possible. It makes a cute story that we will want to look for. I've written a paper called "Kant's Transcendental Idealism"<sup>1</sup> that explains exactly the theme where Kant changed the meaning of 'actually' from the Cartesian sense of "formal being", from "formal reality" in the scholastic sense. (I'm giving a basic

<sup>1</sup>"Kant's Transcendental Idealism" (KTI, 98) reprinted in *Kant's Transcendental Metaphysics* (118).

ontology here, one that forces Kant, once he makes this move, to make comparable moves elsewhere.) I want to turn to giving the full implications of this passage.

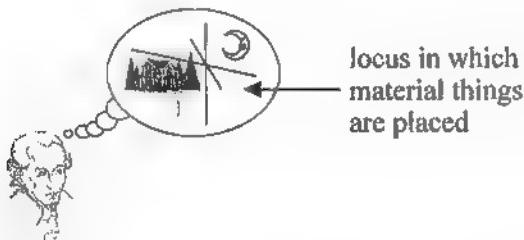
7. For example, according to Newton, here (Figure 1) is space (later on, we will explore the cash value of Newton's views of space as contrasted with others).



**Figure 1**

The classical ontology says: "Here is actual space which has being. In some way, it may depend on God. Maybe it is even actual space with houses, chairs, apples and trees, some moons, and so on, located in it. And you have relative spaces as systems of physical objects."

8. But, then, there can also be a person who is representing space (Figure 2).



**Figure 2**

According to Kant, and according to the tradition that I just set up, the space that is represented is construed as an object, an object of intuition. We *intuit* space. Well, you see, all of these philosophers, as Malebranche put it, knew that the mind can not get up by its skin and roam around in physical space. So the mind, in some sense, must deal with that which is

Space  
as  
Object

immanent in it. Now we represent space. And the space that we represent is something which depends for its being upon being represented. It is not so much that people were stunned by this as the idea which Kant will ultimately elaborate (which he doesn't argue for here though he does argue for the position in the *Transcendental Aesthetic*.) But, in any event, for Kant, here is the only kind of being that space has: it is essentially something that is represented.

9. By contrast, a Newtonian would respond, "Well, there are two ways that space can have being. It can have being as independent of the mind and as a locus in which material things are placed, in which they exist, in which they move around; and then there is space as something represented." Nobody would have qualms about this. When you represent the moon, the sun, and the chair in space (again, we are not concerned with the niceties; we want to make the point rudely), they are in space. The important thing, for Kant, is that space exists *only* as something that is represented. And therefore, everything spatial exists only as something the *esse* of which is to be represented. So Kant's thesis is that the physical world is something the *esse* of which is to be represented.

10. Of course, as I said, when Kant takes into account other people (I have my representation of space, you have yours), Kant ultimately has to treat space and physical objects as representables. But that does not mean that he gives them mindly being in the scholastic sense. He acknowledges that we must bring in the representables to balance the insufficiency of what is actually represented. He will give a coherent theory of that actuality. But that is story we will get to later.

11. What I want to say is simply that, in this passage, Kant is not giving us the niceties; he is giving us the hard-nosed part of his view. Let's look at the passage again.

We must give full credence to this paradoxical but correct proposition, that there is nothing in space save what is represented in it. For space is itself nothing but representation.... .

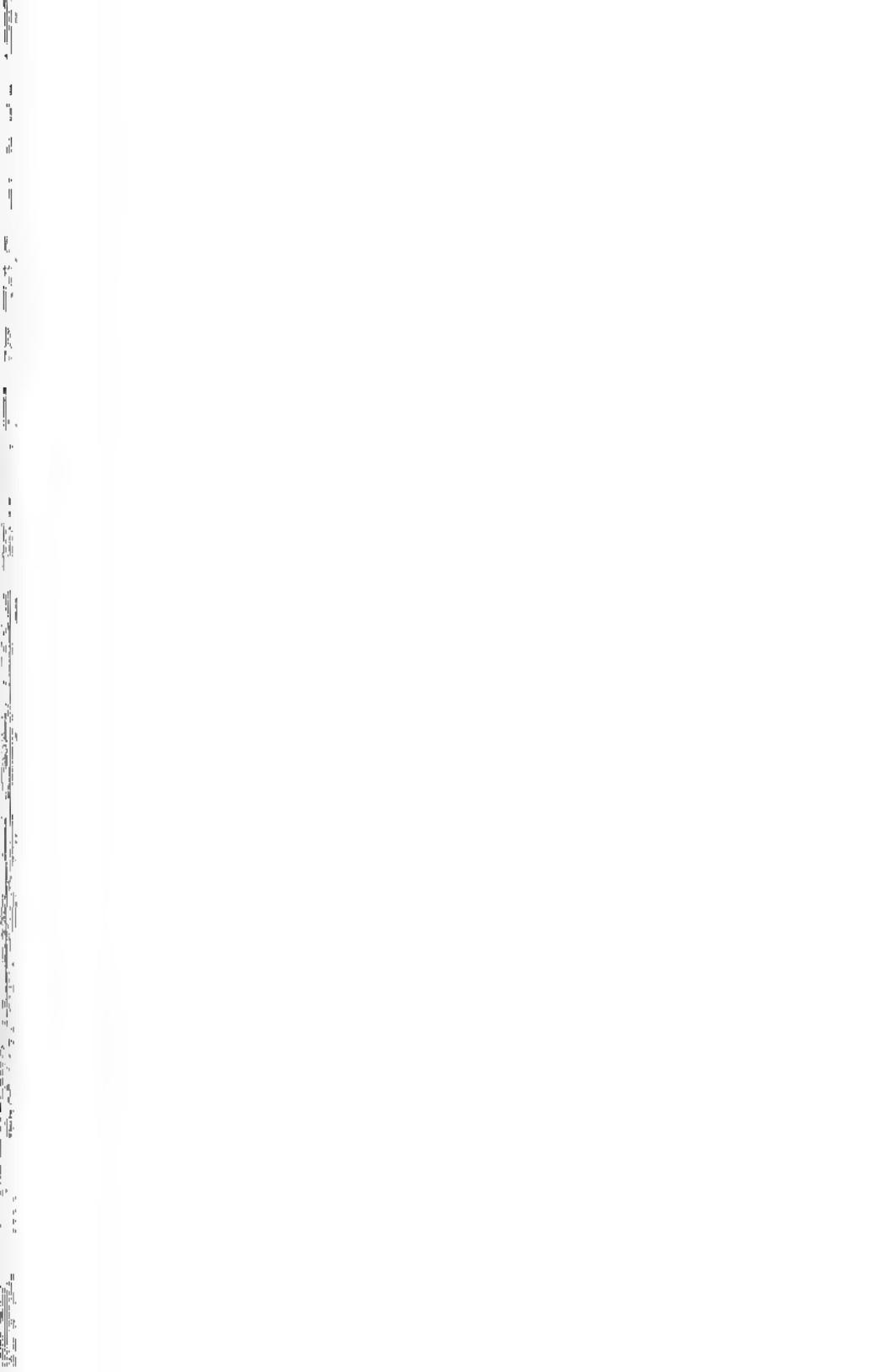
So, he is arguing, "I proved in the *Aesthetic* to our satisfaction, i.e., Kantian satisfaction, that the *esse* of space is to be represented." He thinks that he proved that in the *Aesthetic*. And, therefore, of anything in space, it must be said that its *esse* is also to be represented. This is what he is saying here.

Nothing whatsoever is in space, save in so far as it is actually represented in it. It is a proposition which must indeed sound strange, that a thing can

*exist only in the representation of it.... [Emphasis, ws.]*

That is what I was spelling out.

...but in this case the objection falls, inasmuch as the things with which we are here concerned are not things in themselves, but appearances only, that is, representations.



## Chapter 6: Intuition and Space

### *A. The Aristotelian tradition and this-suches*

1. Are there any questions about what I was talking about last time? Any second thoughts that you have? I will settle for thoughts. Suppose someone asks, "What does the phrase 'this-such' mean?" and "if Kant thinks that an intuition of a this-such involves no mediation by general concepts, then how come there is a "such" in there?"<sup>1</sup>

2. Well, that is an ultimate issue in the history of philosophy. The Aristotelian tradition holds that the world consists of this-suches that are individuals, and that our basic representations of the world, our perceptions, are representations of this-suches. It also holds that our general concepts are, in some sense, derived from our awareness of this-suches. You have really to take the phrase 'this-such' as a kind of unanalyzed expression- but of course the minute that you break it up into 'this' and 'such', you directly get into the problem that the question is raising.

3. Putting it in the metaphysical context as opposed to the concept formation context, this is the problem of the sense in which an individual for Aristotle consists of, or is composed of, form and matter. In what sense is a this-such as an individual substance, a "this" plus a "such"? Of course, that is a big story. I would warn against taking literally this metaphor of composition and I have discussed that in numerous places.<sup>2</sup>

4. But, for the moment, let us take, for example, 'this-cube' as a sort of hyphenated, unanalyzed expression that involves somehow being of a certain kind but yet somehow individuated. The problem of individuation, needless to say, is one that haunts the Aristotelian tradition from Aristotle down through Scotus. This is a difficult issue. Somehow an individual is a "this-cube." It is an individuated nature, as we might put it metaphorically; it is the nature of cube individuated to a particular location in the world. All

<sup>1</sup>Kant's alternative to the Empiricist's "simple ideas" as the basic conceptual representation is the notion of an intuition. Sellars raises the question, "how can intuitions be the ultimate subjects of possible judgments yet at the same time involve the fabric of relations implied by the 'such'?" He will explain, in other words, how Kant finds synthesis involved even at the basic level (see B143). In the place where the Cartesian would say that natures "unfold" into complex relations through rational insight, Sellars finds an echo of a tradition going back to the Presocratics and Aristotle; see, for example, "Raw Materials, Subjects, and Substrata," in *PPHP* (101).

<sup>2</sup>Consult the essays on Aristotle in *PPHP* (101).

kinds of metaphors were used.

5. The same issues arise at the level of our basic experience. If the basic objects are this-suches, this-cube, this-bear, this-man and so on, then our basic experiences are of that kind of thing and, therefore, I am urging, it would be a mistake to take the word 'such' here as already standing for a general as such.

6. Our concept of cube, you might say, is in some sense abstracted (this is the metaphor that was used), somehow derived from an experience of a this-cube. So there is a fundamental distinction between general concepts and the basic representations of individuals which are, as it were, not just "blind" sense impressions. In the Aristotelean tradition, they are representations of something as something; a representation of this-cube is not a blind representation, but a representation of something as a cube. But, of course, when we formulate it in this way, we use our metalanguage; we look at it theoretically. We look at it in terms of a framework with general concepts that we already possess. We couldn't draw these distinctions unless we were at the level of general concepts. When we say of the representation of this-cube that it is the representation of an individual as a cube, we are, as it were, looking back at a certain kind of experience and attempting to understand it philosophically.

7. The problems involved in this Aristotelian tradition are enormous, as we all know, so that there is no single source of difficulty. I mean, it isn't as if one could put a finger on something that was right about this view or wrong about it. It is a very tempting view. Look around the room; distinguish your judgments, "that is a chair," "that is a table,"—judgmental classifications—"this is a such and such." But, then, notice that, in a certain sense as you sweep around the room with your eyes, you are aware of this-rectangle, this-wall, this-..., you know: without it having the explicit form of a judgment "this is a wall", you see.

8. Now we can give several theories about that and I have my own view. I am just saying that at some level we have to acknowledge a profound insight in this idea of a basic representation of an individual as of a certain sort.

9. The trouble is that, in the Aristotelian tradition, this is regarded as primary so that the human mind can have a representation of a this-such and then from that, in some way, it can form the concept of the such as a general: like the general concept of triangularity or of a cube (Figure 1). Whereas we might be tempted to say that the experience of a this-such presupposes the general concept, this is not the classical tradition. The

temptation to suppose that experience, even in its most primitive form, comes to us, as it were, as experiences of items as "of" a certain sort, this is what I have called the "Myth of the Given" in my paper "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind";<sup>3</sup> that is exactly it. It is something that is much alive today.

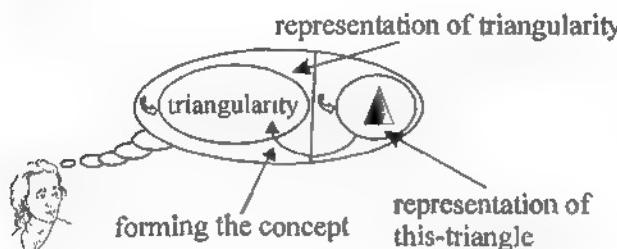


Figure 1

10. One alternative is to suppose that experience comes to us as bare <sup><de-</sup> "suches" and that all "suches" come in through judgment; then you get into <sup>Hume's</sup> all the paradoxes of substratum theory. I think the Aristotelian tradition <sup>PS</sup> avoids these although there are problems with respect to the concept of prime matter, but that is another story. I don't think Aristotle is committed to a "bare" substratum in an appropriately contemporary sense.

11. You might say that Locke's view ontologically presents us with particulars which somehow *have* qualities: they are havers. The problem is, then, the nature of the haver. It can't be a mere haver: then you get the ultimate physical problem here and similarly on the side of concept formation. On the latter topic, Locke is much more Aristotelian; Locke's ideas are really the descendants of the Aristotelian perceptions of "this-suches," only they are much eviscerated. Aristotle's primary experiences are robust compared to Locke's because Aristotle's primary experiences are experiences of substances: a this-such where that is this-dog, this-man, this-carrot, "this-item having a certain substantial nature." So the empiricist tendency is to whittle down the "such" content of what was really being experienced—then it was put in the hands of Hume.

12. Hume's impressions, you must remember, are not sheer blind impressions of sense as they become in Kant. Hume's impressions are *convictions*. They are cousins of ideas which are obviously, for Hume, thoughts, and a vivid idea is a belief. You must remember that, for Hume,

<sup>3</sup> EPM (31) reprinted in SPR (53).

to have an impression of a red triangle is to have an impression of something *as* a red triangle. It is to have an impression of a this-such—this-red-triangle—an experience of a this-red-triangle. You cannot understand Hume—I mean Hume couldn't understand himself if he didn't have centuries of stalagmites and stalactites to lean on.

13. O.k.? That is all that I can say at the moment. We will just have to see how it works.

### *B. Space as content; intersubjectivity*

14. The point that I was presenting at the end of the last time is that, when Kant talks about space as an intuition, it is to be understood in terms of his picture of a representation as having a certain content, something that has dependent being—that “exists in,” that is a content of, an act. We have an “act” and the “content,” or immanent object. As I pointed out, this space that we represent is for Kant not an actually existing individual in the classical sense. It is something that has being for thought: you destroy the mind, you destroy that act, and you destroy space. Except, of course, there is the problem of intersubjectivity.

15. Intersubjectivity must be distinguished from sheer objectivity. Although Kant doesn't have much to say about intersubjectivity in the first edition, he has more to say about it in the *Prolegomena* and in the second edition of the *Critique*. If two people are representing space, assuming that they are awake and not dreaming, in a sense they have the same content. The sense in which they have the *same* content is a real classical problem. We want to say that in any useful philosophy of mind, people can think of the same thing, can be aware of the same thing. We want to take the word ‘same’ here in some very tough sense.

16. As I said, this way of looking at mental acts starts out by thinking of the content as depending for its being on that particular act: the content is the content of a particular act. But the problem comes up that even one and the same person at different times represents the same thing. So a kind of transcendence begins to develop in which the content transcends a particular act and then, ultimately, any particular mind.

17. As I was emphasizing, this tended later in the period to evolve into what one can call a theological conceptualism or a theological representationalism. God also can represent space and of course, presumably for Kant, God does represent space. You see, people don't like to talk about Kant in terms of God. But you have to remember that Kant believed in God

Not  
this is  
true that

as the creator of the world; and never forget that. He attacks specific arguments for the existence of God, but God exists and God is the creator of the world. He never for one minute doubted this. God can represent space: so in some sense God is representing the same thing that we represent.

18. Now of course for Kant space does not have, in the classical sense, actual existence, that is, "formal reality," being independent of thought. We have, you might say, three ways in which space can exist. It can exist as a content of a particular act in a particular mind, and there it exists only as something that is represented. It is space only as it is represented. It can exist as the content of a divine representation. Finally, it can in principle exist independently of mind, except causally. (We are not talking about causal dependence here; we are talking about a very special kind of epistemic dependence.) What Kant does is to deny this kind of being for space:

There are items which are actual in the classical sense but they are exactly the things in themselves.

### *C. Representing space as infinite; "of" versus "as"*

19. I want to answer a question that goes back a bit. It has to do with representing space as infinite and representing every part. I want to say that Kant has committed himself to the idea that the representation of an infinite individual is not a representation of all of the parts of it.<sup>4</sup> There's a difference between representing space *as* infinite and representing all of it, all its parts.

20. If you represent space as infinite, the problem arises: what does that mean? That however many parts we represent, we represent them as parts of an infinite whole. There is always a "more". There are always more parts to be represented. For example, when I represent persons as physical objects, I do not represent all kinds of parts, outsides, tops, bottoms and so on. I am perceptually representing them as physical objects, but I am not representing every part of them. Right? But it will turn out for Kant, of course, that I can always represent more of you. There's more of the person in front of me than is on his face, on his side.

<sup>4</sup>It was typical of Sellars to start a lecture with requests for questions. Sellars is responding to a request for clarification on his explanation of the idea of space. Since he repeats my question, it has been omitted.

21. We start out with the problem of two truths, namely, that one represents space as infinite and that one doesn't represent all of its parts. Then the question arises: what is it to represent space as infinite? That's what we're trying to explicate. The problem is to explicate what it is to represent space *as infinite* without representing all of its parts. It's the idea that, no matter how many parts of space you have, you know that necessarily there is more. What is it to represent Jones as a physical solid being? Well, no matter what physical representations I have there are always more. I am drawing a distant analogy to the fact that any physical object involves a "more representable" and in that way space involves a "more representable".

22. Does that imply that every representation of space is a representation of a finite space? Yes, but it is a representation of a finite space as part of an infinite space: this sentence of Kant's is one which, for me, has to be explicated but not parsed away. You might as well say, when I represent Jones, all I represent is his face because I am not representing the back of his head. But, on the contrary, I am representing Jones as a whole physical object. But of that whole physical object there is one part which is the part which I am now representing, the face; you mustn't ever say that when I represent Jones, all I am representing is a face. You see the analogy?

23. When one perceives a physical object like this lectern I've been favoring, when one represents the lectern, one represents it as a whole physical object, as a lectern. But from the front one does not perceive the back or the inside. Now the physical object is, conceptually, a whole physical object, but of it, at any one time, we are perceiving one aspect of it, if you will. That is the analogy and, as I said, all analogies fail. However, it is important to see that one can represent something as a physical object without representing all of its parts. And yet one knows that a physical object has more parts than one is representing. Similarly, one represents space as infinite without representing all its parts. One doesn't simply represent parts, one represents them *as parts of an infinite whole*.

24. The problem then arises: what is it, to represent something as a part of an infinite whole? That is where the business of a kind of constructivism comes in, viz., the principles governing consciousness of space require that for a representation of a finite part there be a more. And not just parasitically but essentially. Space is essentially a more. But as I said there is a certain analogy found here between the fact that we perceive a whole physical object and that we don't perceive all of its parts. We perceive them as part of a physical object. That is the point I was making about space (and

The analogy  
with physical  
objects

the analogy is even stronger than I've been permitting myself to push it, as we'll see later, when we consider Kant's theory of physical objects).<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Sellars is drawing a distinction between the constructivist's mathematical concept of the representation of space and the metaphysician's way of looking at the representation of space as infinite.



## Chapter 7: Intuition and Sensation

### A. Intuition and abstraction

1. I call your attention to the use of 'immediate'. I characterized an intuition as a representation of an individual unmediated by general concepts. I wasn't, in that context, explicating what Kant means by the immediate relation to an object. I wasn't commenting on that passage. I was giving you an understanding of what the Aristotelian means by an intuition. I was concerned with giving a straightforward explicit account of what an intuition is. It's a representation of a singular unmediated by a general concept.
2. By the way, it might be worth noticing that, in the latter part of the passage at the end of *The Transcendental Exposition of the Concept of Space*, Kant is concerned with the difference between intuition and sensation.<sup>1</sup> This is a passage which occurs in the first edition and is replaced in the second edition. But that is not the important thing, for it is not that Kant is disagreeing there; it's just that he has another way of putting it. Notice that Kant says,

Further, no one can have *a priori* a representation of a color or of any taste; whereas, since space concerns only the pure form of intuition, and therefore involves no sensation whatsoever, and nothing empirical, all kinds and determinations of space can and must be represented *a priori*, if concepts of figures and of their relations are to arise. (A29) [emphasis, ws]

This is a very explicit statement that general concepts pertaining to geometrical figures presuppose a context in which you can represent all kinds of determinations of space a priori. That is the sort of passage I had in mind when I said we start out by representing this-line—hyphenated you see. Then we form the general concept of line.

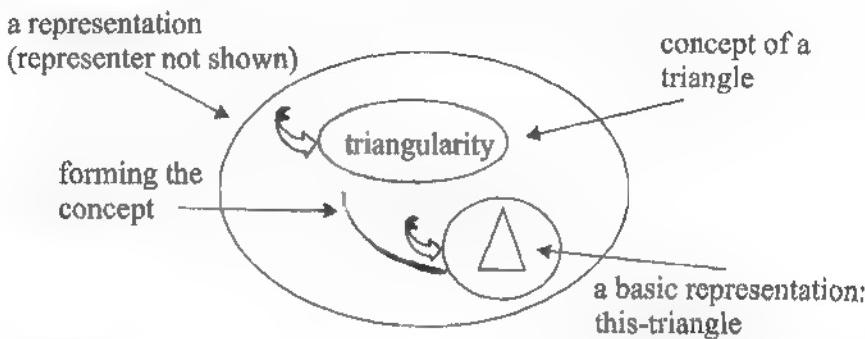
3. We have the intuition of "this-kind-of-triangle" (hyphenate that) and then we form the general concept of a triangle (figure 1). That's exactly it. So, Kant has, as I put it, an abstractionist view of how we come by spe-

<sup>1</sup> A28 to the end of §3. This passage hovers around an issue that separated Sellars from Kantian scholars of the time—most of whom did not follow the distinction he draws between intuition and sheer receptivity.

See  
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54

cific geometrical concepts. They presuppose the presence in intuition or examples.



**Figure 1**

That is a passage to bear in mind. Earlier, Kant says,

For there is no other subjective representation from which we can derive a priori synthetic propositions, as we can from intuition in space (§3). Strictly speaking, therefore, these other representations have no ideality although they agree with the representation of space in this respect, that they belong merely to the subjective constitution of our manner of sensibility, for instance, of sight, hearing, touch, as in the case of the sensations of colors, sounds, and heat, which, since they are mere sensations and no intuitions, do not of themselves yield knowledge of any object, least of all any a priori knowledge. (B44)

*The trans-sensual or empirical of mind?*

Kant is saying that sensations are actual modifications of the mind. They are subjective in that very tough sense. Space is something that is represented by mind and is an aspect of our sensibility but it is, nevertheless something that by itself yields knowledge. It's a different kind of representation than a sensation of red or even of pain.

### B. Erkenntnis

- As a matter of fact, in the passage which makes a similar point in the first edition, you notice that Kant says,

This subjective condition of all outer appearances cannot, therefore, be compared to any other. The taste of a wine does not belong to the objective determinations of the wine, not even if by the wine as an object w

mean the wine as appearance, but to the special constitution of sense in the subject that tastes it. Colors are not properties of the bodies to the intuition of which they are attached [metaphor], but only modifications of the sense of sight, which is affected in a certain manner by light. Space, on the other hand, as a condition of outer objects, necessarily belongs to their appearance or intuition. [emphasis and comment, ws] (A28-9)

Once again we have a distinction between sensation as modification of the mind and intuition, representation which is an Erkenntnis: sensation is not an Erkenntnis. We can have knowledge of sensation, but sensations themselves are not Erkenntnisse.

5. Intuition is an Erkenntnis. And that's why I've been emphasizing this idea that we can represent a triangle as a triangle. That's an intuition (Figure 2). In addition, we have what Kant calls the analytic activity of the understanding. It can go to work on an intuition—noticing, comparing, distinguishing and so on. And we can form the general concept of triangle.

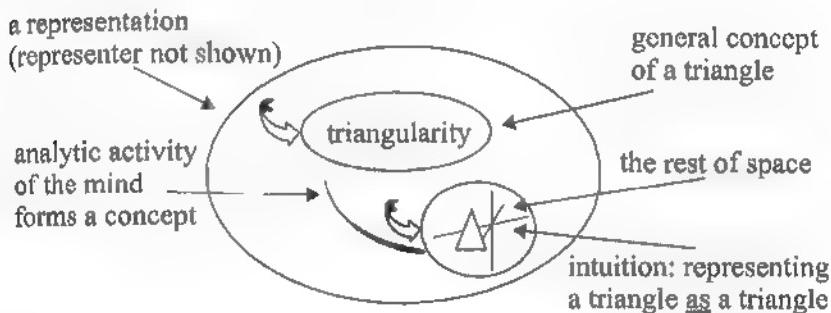


Figure 2

6. This representation of triangle is already, as such, a representation of something as something but not in a way which is part of general concepts. You find this a puzzling notion? Well, history of philosophy contains many puzzling things. None has been more persistent than this notion that we have a basic kind of awareness of something as something from which we can form a general concept. I've been reading recently, for example, a book on perception by James Cornman and in that he talks about a basic kind of awareness of kinds. It lives today.

7. So I call your attention then to that very important distinction between sensations and intuitions. As I put it in the Descartes-Berkeley

paper<sup>2</sup>, a sensation of red is apparently an actual case of red. For example, being a pain is an actual case of pain. Whereas space is something the esse of which is to be known. Kant keeps putting it in that very interesting way that "appearances exists only by being known"—exist only in being known.

8. He's using the word 'knowledge' in a way which is very uncustomary today. We build into the very word 'knowledge' probable truth. But Kant doesn't build that into it because he has this more basic notion that there is a kind of awareness of objects as being of a certain sort which is prior to general propositional knowledge. Propositional knowledge always involves general concepts. For Kant, there is a kind of awareness of objects in the broad sense, an awareness of them as being of a certain sort which is prior to propositional knowledge, prior to judgments, prior to anything having the explicit form of a judgment.

### C. *Sensations and space; primary and secondary qualities*

9. Now there are some other themes I wanted to touch on pertaining to the *Aesthetic*. Consider the first argument for space:

1. Space is not an empirical concept which has been derived from outer experiences. For in order that certain sensations be referred to something outside me (that is, to something in another region of space from that in which I find myself) [outside my body, w], and similarly in order that I may be able to represent them as outside and alongside one another, and accordingly as not only different but as in different places, the representation of space must be presupposed. (A23/B38)

Notice that although Kant thinks of sensations as essentially modifications of the mind, he does think that somehow we can, as he puts it, refer these sensations to places in space. Now strictly speaking, sensations are not in space.

10. I think this is a very interesting insight. Somehow states which are mental states are somehow treated by the mind as though they were in physical space, as though they were out there, in space. Kant and philosophers of this period all agreed that colors are not in physical space and they all accepted some form of the idea that we somehow believe that they are—we refer them to places in space. This is a kind of basic propensity that the mind has: Descartes thought that. In the Descartes-Berkeley paper,

<sup>2</sup>BD (95) is "Berkeley and Descartes Reflections on the 'New Way of Ideas'" reprinted in Kant's *Transcendental Metaphysics* (KTM, 118).

or does he  
intend refer  
to "mean  
represented  
by"

I say that, according to Descartes, we have that sort of natural propensity at early ages of childhood, so to speak, to think of either our sensations, or something like our sensations, being in physical space.

11. It is very important to follow through on this because Kant takes seriously the idea that physical objects do not have colors. Color is not properly an appearance. By 'appearance' in that context, Kant means physical objects. Kant will later on, as we will see, draw a distinction between sensations which are modifications of the mind and that which corresponds to them in appearances: which turns out to be the powers, the propensities, the forces and the energies and so on, which are the really important things about physical objects. So, although we do have a natural propensity to refer our sensations to locations in space, he regards it as a kind of natural propensity which is to be criticized, just as Descartes did.

12. So, roughly, according to Kant, we have to distinguish in our representation of say, a tree, a chair, or a table, what we *naively* think to be at that place in space where the tree is, for example, color: I think color is there whereas color belongs to us as modification. What we have to put in our diagram here (Figure 3) is the history of the empirical self in time. Let's call this me, 'the known self'. Color really belongs to the me. It's a modification of the self. But when we represent the world naively, we think color is in the tree. Color really belongs to the known self, not to the tree. All the tree has is something which is a counterpart: it has the power to cause the mind to have sensations of various kinds and so, according to Kant, physical objects have, in the traditional language, only primary qualities and secondary qualities in Locke's sense.

Me, the known self,  
shown as the history of  
the known self

a sequence of representations  
to which color really belongs

color is not in  
the tree

color thought naively  
to be at that place in  
space where the tree is

sensuous side  
(not pictured)

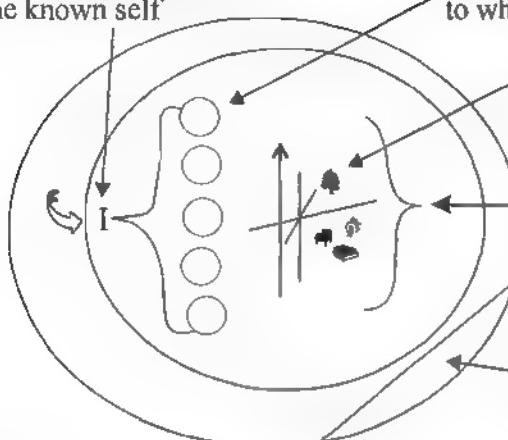


Figure 3

13. Secondary qualities, in Locke's sense are simply powers: powers that objects have to cause sensations, to cause sensory modifications. So, as I said, according to Kant, the criticized representation of the physical world—leaving the “me” here aside now, just thinking about the physical world—is that anything in space really has only physical properties in a very tough sense: the properties which are studied by mechanics. Objects in space (we're not worried about time now) have only the kinds of properties that are the subject matter of mechanics.

14. Now let's back this up. I've already backed it up in part by emphasizing the distinction between sensation and intuition. It's to me astonishing that the nice explicit contrast that Kant has there has not been perceived as important as it actually is. Here is a passage in the *Critique*:

II. In confirmation of this theory of the ideality of both outer and inner sense, and therefore of all objects of the senses, as mere appearances, it is especially relevant to observe that everything in our knowledge which belongs to intuition—feeling of pleasure and pain, and the will, not being knowledge, are excluded—[he should have added “sensation also being excluded,” ws] (B66)

So, “that everything in our knowledge which belongs to intuition”—here's the payoff in the rest of the line:

*contains nothing but mere relations; ... (B66) [emphasis, ws]*

Well, obviously, if Kant was thinking of color as belonging to intuition, he wouldn't have said that—because color doesn't consist of mere relations. O.k., everything which belongs to intuition "contains nothing but mere relations."



## Chapter 8: Space, Time, and Relations

### A. Systems of relations

1. To support the view that physical objects which exist in space are not things in themselves, Kant argues (B66) that what we represent in outer intuition can consist only of mere relations. Then, he says, nothing which consists of mere relations can exist in itself, which is an obvious truth. I mean, if you take it literally, nothing which simply consists of relations can exist independently of mind, can exist in itself.

2. Let's continue:

Now a thing in itself cannot be known through mere relations; and we may therefore conclude that since outer sense gives us *nothing but mere relations*, ... [italics, ws]

So, sense gives us nothing but mere relations.

This also holds true of inner sense, not only because the representations of the *outer senses* constitute the proper material with which we occupy our mind, but because the time in which we set these representations, which is itself antecedent to the consciousness of them in experience, and which underlies them as the formal condition of the mode in which we posit them in the mind...,

now,

itself contains [only] relations of succession, coexistence, and of that which is coexistent with succession, the enduring. Now that which, as representation, can be antecedent to any and every act of thinking anything...,

(thinking—that means using general concepts. Kant usually uses ‘concept’ to mean ‘general concept’ and thinking to mean the use of general concepts)

...can be antecedent to any and every act of [using general concepts, ws] is intuition;

And underline this:

*and if it contains nothing but relations, it is the form of intuition.* [italics, ws] (B67)

3. Of course, he thinks this true of space also. Kant starts out the *Aesthetic* delicately for his readers, but now he is laying it out, you see. He's making it clear that, when he says that time is an intuition, this is compatible with time as a system of relations. When you say that intuition is a representation of a singular, can't that singular be a system of relations? What does singularity consist of? The fact that it is referred to a by a singular term. TIME. T-I-M-E is; Space is. Why is it an intuition rather than a concept? Because they represent an individual or a singular. This is prior to any general concepts. How did I define intuition to begin with? That's exactly how I defined it. So it is important to see that Kant is agreeing that time is a system of relations, that space is a system of relations.

#### B. Leibniz and Descartes

4. His disagreement with Leibniz is much deeper. Leibniz held that space is a system of relation (just take space because Leibniz is much more baffling on time). According to Leibniz, space—the space of mechanics if you will—is a system of relations and this system of relations exists only in being represented. Kant agrees with that.

5. But Leibniz adds a little bit more. There Kant balks. Let me put it this way: according to Leibniz, here (Figure 1) is a monad and it is representing a space. It's representing the system of possible relations.

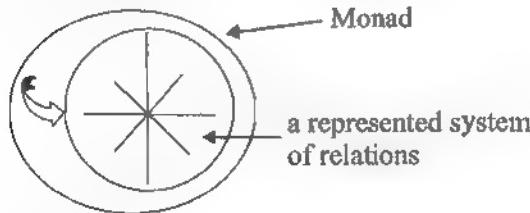


Figure 1

Of course Leibniz is in the tradition that this system of possible relations has existence as the content of this act of representing: it's a *represented*.

But according to Leibniz there corresponds to it something in independent reality. Here (Figure 2) are other monads:

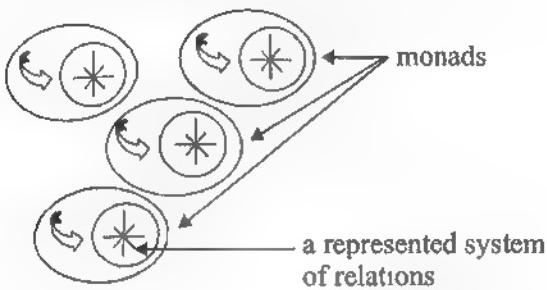


Figure 2

And according to Leibniz there is, in a sense which I will be explicating, a system—we have a promissory note here—a system of *ideal relations* between these monads. Let me put these rays in (Figure 3) to indicate some kind of structure; a system of ideal relations between these monads which, according to Leibniz, not only is a counterpart of the relations represented, but furthermore is such that this system of represented relations is a confused representation of the system of ideal relations.

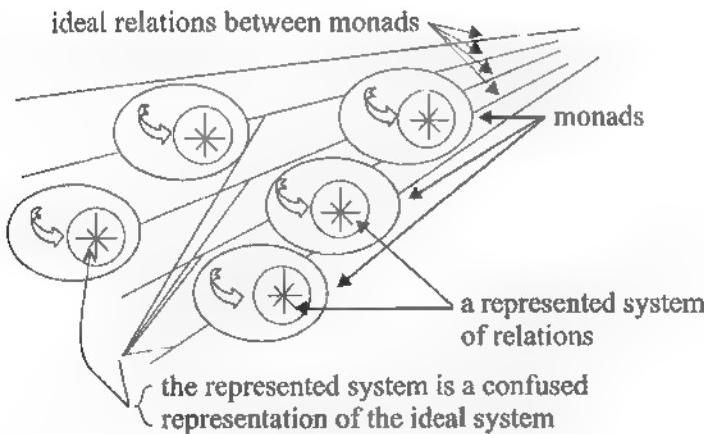
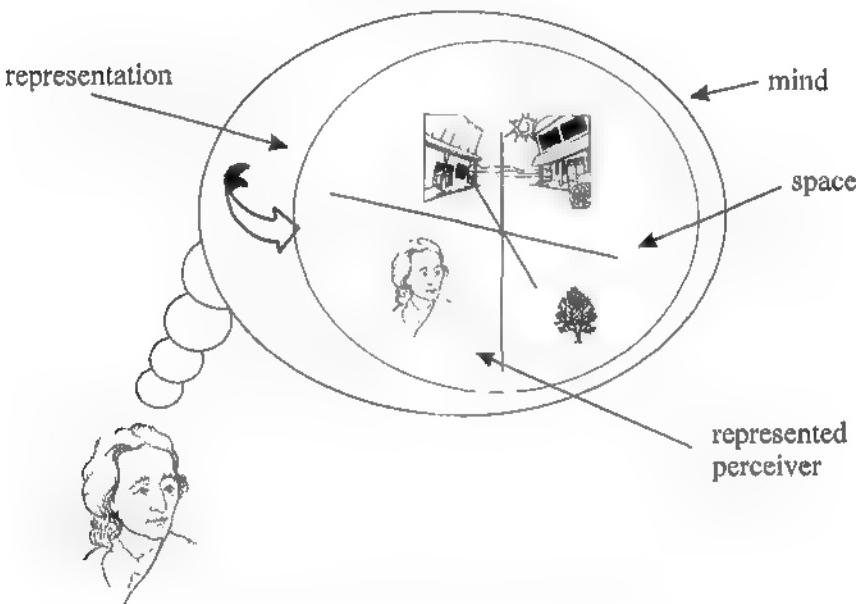


Figure 3

6. Leibniz thinks of space as a phenomenon *bene fundata*: i.e., there

is a metaphysical system<sup>1</sup> of relations between monads which is not literally spatial, but which in some way is the *transcendent object* of this representing of space. So (Figure 3), the monads represent space—the space of mechanics—and that space is something represented: it is essentially a represented. There is nothing in independent reality which literally corresponds to it in the way in which it does according to Descartes.

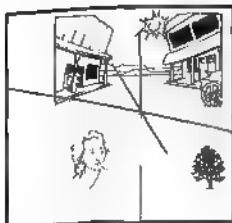
7. Let's look at Descartes' view. Here (Figure 4) is a mind: it represents space and a tree in a certain place in relation to its own body.



**Figure 4**

Well, then, according to Descartes, that's the sort of thing that can literally exist in independent reality. Here is *res extensa* (Figure 5); here is the tree as a system of modifications of *res extensa*; here is our body. What has objective being as the content of this representing (Figure 4) has formal reality in the world (Figure 5). There is a literal correspondence which we can put by saying that one and the same item, namely me *cum* tree, has two kinds of being, being in my mind and being in the world.

<sup>1</sup>The concept of a metaphysical system of relations, while unfamiliar to the modern reader, was more widely used during the period than one might expect. See, for example, the appendix on Spinoza

**Figure 5***C. Metaphysics and appearance*

8. Now you see, Leibniz says that there is indeed *something* which corresponds to our representation of space and to our representation of material things, but it doesn't correspond in this perfect way in which it does in Descartes. According to Leibniz, what has being in my mind, being in the act of representation, does not identically have being independently of mind, but something which is a counterpart does have formal reality and that is a system of unextended monads. And so again, space and the objects in space are appearances, if you will, but we can also, as metaphysicians, say that not only are they appearances, but they have something corresponding to them in reality which we can give a metaphysical account of. Whereas, according to Kant, what there is in reality corresponding to representations of space and material objects are simply unknowable things in themselves.

9. Kant says metaphysics cannot tell us what independent reality is like. Leibniz thinks that metaphysics can tell us what independent reality is like. Leibniz says that metaphysical reasoning can assure us that independent reality is not matter. Kant agrees with that. Leibniz goes on to say that metaphysics can tell us not only what independent reality is not, it can also tell us what independent reality is. Leibniz gives an account of the counterpart relations between unextended monads which are not in space - a metaphysical account of the counterpart to what we represent when we represent the world.

10. We represent the world as materials things. There really are no material things. That doesn't mean that there is nothing which, in a legitimate sense, corresponds to what we represent, but what does correspond is something that has a categorially different status, you might say, than what we represent. It's not only categorially different; it has a transcendentally

different status—using the scholastic notion here. But still for Leibniz there is a genuine structural counterpart between the ideal relations among monads and what we represent when we represent material things. What corresponds to material things is not mere things in themselves; it is monads which are little representers. And the ideal relations are to be understood in terms of the concept of representation.

11. So I'll be giving, later on, when we get to specific criticism of Leibniz, an account of what Leibniz thinks, what Kant thinks Leibniz' views were, and what Leibniz' view actually were with respect to what there is in reality which is the counterpart and foundation of representations of matter in space.

12. Now that's a chunk and as I said I'm giving you a promissory note because to spell out Leibniz' system is a task which has substantial magnitude and which I don't want to embark upon until I'm sure that we're tuned in on a common vocabulary and understanding of the "new way of ideas," the theory of representation.

13. I wanted to emphasize that Kant is very like Leibniz: space is a system of relations. The difference is that according to Kant, as I said, our representation of space is not a confused representation of reality. Instead of saying that what has objective reality here has formal reality there, Leibniz says that what has objective reality here is somehow a confused version of what has formal reality in the world.

## Chapter 9: Appearance and the In Itself

### A. Appearance and 'appears'

1. Let me follow up a theme from the *Aesthetic*. First, let's look at the *Note to the Amphiboly of Concepts of Reflection* where he explicitly comments on Leibniz:

But this necessity, which is founded solely on abstraction, does not arise in the case of things as given in intuition with determinations that express mere relations.... *All that we know in matter is merely relations* (what we call the inner determinations of it are inward only in a comparative sense),.... The fact that, if I abstract from these relations, there is nothing more left for me to think does not rule out the concept of a thing as appearance, nor indeed the concept of an object *in abstracto*. [first emphasis, ws] (A284-5/B341)

He says that an object can be a system of relations and that ties in with what I've been saying. And now here is the crucial sentence:

What it does remove is all possibility of an object determinable through mere concepts, that is of a noumenon. *It is certainly startling to hear that a thing is to be taken as consisting wholly of relations.* Such a thing is, however, mere appearance, and cannot be thought through *pure categories*; ... [emphasis, ws] (A284-5/B341)

2. It's an important passage because 'pure categories' appears and, as you know, in contrast to 'pure categories' is 'schematized categories'. But that's looking ahead.
3. Anyway, he's telling us that material things which are appearances consist wholly of relations. And he told us that space itself consists wholly of relations and that is part of his argument for the second class status, you might say, of the world of space. Space and everything in it consists of relations. But nothing that consists of relations (and relations exclusively) can exist *an sich*, can exist in itself. Therefore, it must be mind dependent. That's the argument. That passage simply picks up the *Aesthetic*; it is quite clear that Kant had the passage from the *Aesthetic* (B67) in front of him when he wrote the passage in which he was discussing Leibniz.
4. Now, a word on Kant's use of 'appearance'. There is a neutral use

of the word which anyone would have bought in on at that time: namely, that an appearance is simply a phenomenon, a phenomenon of physics, a phenomenon of chemistry. You might say, that is a "nonpolitical" use of the word 'appearance' as far as philosophy is concerned. There are passages where Kant uses the word 'appearance' in its nonpolitical sense.

5. Then there are two committal senses in which Kant uses the word 'appearance'. One is derived from the context "things in themselves appear to us"; this is a verb. Kant is quite willing to say, for example, "appears to us to be spatial," or "appears to us as spatial." There are many passages in which Kant uses this: meaning things in themselves as they appear to us, as spatial, as temporal and so on.

6. The strong temptation is to go from verbs to verbal nouns. Now you know, and I know, that verbal nouns are in a way grammatically dependent for their being on verbs: no verbs then no verbal nouns. That leads us to look very closely at the verb and to see what its philosophical message is. So a contemporary philosopher who is wise will look at the word 'appearance' and look at the verb 'appear'. And if he runs across the word 'impression', he will look at the verb 'impress'. If he runs across the word 'sensation', he will look for the verb 'sense'. And he will brood about the verb! Verbs usually have subjects and objects of various kinds, direct, indirect, and so on.

7. One of the fascinating features of the history of philosophy is the extent to which Hume got away with murder in his use of the word 'impression'.<sup>1</sup> He himself, of course, recognizes that the fundamental grammar is: something is impressed by something. You might say that the verb

<sup>1</sup>The next to the last paragraph of Part I, Book I, section I, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, contains a sentence that Sellars points to as typical of Hume's inadequate machinery ("as our ideas are images..."). Hume contrasts impressions (sensations) and ideas, i.e., images. In Locke the contrast between ideas and sense impressions is a contrast between *abstracta* and *concreta*. Hume is not clear about this but retains the contrast between sensations and images in the form of a contrast between impressions and ideas pertaining to sense. To have an idea of a red triangle is to think of a red triangle as contrasted with experiencing a red triangle which involves having a sense impression of it; in some sense there is a red triangle and one experiences it. A sense impression of a red triangle is a "knowing" of it, i.e., a conviction that there is a red triangle, a primordial or basic conviction that it exists. To have an idea or image is merely to think of a red triangle without the special mechanism whereby an idea gains vividness. It is a mere thinking without conviction that it exists. Sense impressions are primary; they are convinced thoughts (thoughts with convictions) that involve, as Sellars puts it, "sweating with conviction." The "sense impression" of a red triangle is treated as a conviction that a red triangle exists, as a sense impression of it, and as something red and triangular (a red triangle existing in the mind—Hume does not draw the act/content distinction to make sense of this). An idea is a thought of a red triangle, and the image of it (hence, a red triangle) and the thought of the sensation of a red triangle (because a red triangle is an impression of a red triangle). A "secondary idea" of a red triangle is an image of a red triangle, the thought of a thought of a red triangle, and the thought of a red triangle.

'impress' carries with it subject-object places. What Hume does is to give us the verb and kick away the subject and object or at least put in ramshackle counterparts, which cause no end of anguish when he comes to sum things up.

8. Well, anyway, as I said, today we tend to be very careful to look at the verbs, as opposed to verbal nouns. Now Kant uses such phrases as "things in themselves appear to us as spatial," "we know things in themselves as they appear to us" and then he goes from this to "we know appearances" or "we know appearances of things in themselves." Of course, there is nothing particularly new in Kant's making this kind of move, but it is something to be watched like a hawk. You see, Descartes might have said, "things in themselves, objects in the world, appear to us as colored." And then he might have said, "well, color is an appearance of objects in the world." So this by itself does not really tell us Kant's motivation here.

9. Why is it that as the *Critique* goes on, Kant less and less uses the verb formulation and more and more and more puts things in the verbal noun formulation: "we know appearances of things in themselves," "appearances are spatial, things in themselves are not" and so on? There is a very simple answer. This period, with Leibniz and Kant, really begins the rediscovery of the problem of individuation. In the high scholastic period, endless amounts of energy and controversy were devoted to the topic of individuation (matter, the principle of individuation, and forms. Is there an individuating form? Individuation of individuation?). That was a crucial problem. For British empiricism the problems just disappear except for a few casual remarks here and there.

### B. *Individuation and the in itself*

10. Kant, as I said, is aware of the problem of individuation, particularly in his brooding about Leibniz. Now you all know the problem of things in themselves: why are they plural? How many things in themselves are there? 15? 1,000? Or does one thing in itself have being and then another evolve? Well of course Kant didn't (can't) answer that question.

11. So, there is the "in itself". Instead of speaking cavalierly of the lectern in itself and the blackboard in itself, what do we do? It just isn't enough to speak of the heat in itself although that's a good move. And Kant's perfectly happy: according to Kant, there is an in itself. But this is not supposed to be an individuating concept which carries with it criteria

for distinguishing between different things in themselves. So there are no criteria for individuating things in themselves, but there is, philosophically, a category of the in itself which is just that which exists independently of what minds think there is.

12. Let me put it this way. The issue comes to a head in the *Paralogisms*. Let's look at the contrast between Leibniz and Spinoza. According to Leibniz independent reality consists of a many. In Kantian terms, there are many things in themselves, namely, monads. How are they individuated? By their natures. In classical medieval terms, they have their own individuating forms. According to Spinoza, how many things are there? Count them: there is only one, God or Nature. Everything else is a modification, in the broad sense, a feature of the one substance. Kant is arguing that metaphysics cannot answer the question "how many?" — cannot provide criteria of individuation. So, roughly, metaphysics cannot choose between Leibniz and Spinoza.

13. Now how does Kant actually think of the in itself? Well, here's a rough indicator: Kant isn't a nominalist; he has very definite ideas as to what the in itself is like. All right, we won't speak of the lectern in itself because that implies commitment to an ultimate plural. So we'll dispense with that way of talking which is what Kant uses to get things started. Nevertheless Kant certainly thought that there is the in itself (the great glob, so to speak); here is the in itself (Figure 1).

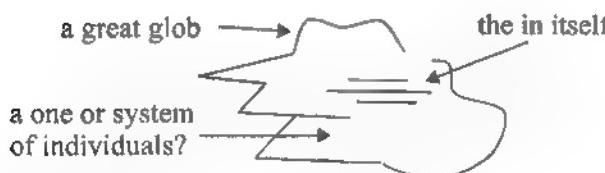


Figure 1

Now we don't know, and metaphysics cannot tell us, whether this is properly viewed as a system of individuals or just one substance; but there is the in itself. Therefore Kant doesn't think that we have a right to say that there is the lectern in itself as a thing in itself in its own right. He certainly thinks of there being a something, some aspect of the in itself which is a counterpart of the lectern: of course he did.

14. Leibniz holds that there are no material objects, but he holds that there is something in the world that is a counterpart, a *real* counterpart to

material things, e.g. that lectern. Leibniz makes the initial move "I can tell you with recognition what that counterpart is": it consists of a multiplicity of representers. Pretty low grade, but still they represent.

15. All right now. What Kant says is that, of course, there is something in the real world as it is in itself which is the counterpart of this lectern. He wouldn't deny that for one minute. And you have to realize that, and take it seriously, otherwise this thing in itself will become boggy and will block your way. In other words, turning an old thought on its head, you can't get into critical philosophy without the thing in itself and you can't stay in the critical philosophy without the thing in itself. The old joke used to be you can't get into critical philosophy with the thing in itself and you can't stay in with the thing in itself. But that is false. It's an essential part of Kant's doctrine.

16. O.k., so his main point, as you might suspect (he's a metaphysician), is a metaphysical one or rather an epistemological one pertaining to metaphysics. Its part of his epistemology of metaphysics that we can't say "aha, that which corresponds to the lectern is a plurality of monads," or "that which corresponds to the lectern is a feature of God." But still there is a counterpart of the lectern; he takes it for granted. Of course he does. Only you see, we can't say anything determinate about it except that it's a counterpart. That isn't very illuminating.



## Chapter 10: Why Have the In Itself?

### A. Morality, individuation, and the in itself

1. Now where does Kant feel that he can come to grips with individuation with respect to the in itself? It's in his morals. Human beings, as moral beings, cannot be simply features of God. They have to be independent; they have to stand on their own feet; they have to be stoic. Kant's ethics, by the way, is extremely stoic. So it's in his practical philosophy that Kant feels that he can make positive metaphysical statements about some of the in itself: some of the in itself does consist of ultimate realities which are independent realities, viz., persons (Figure 1). Well, whether the rest of reality is or isn't plurality, he leaves open: he doesn't care.

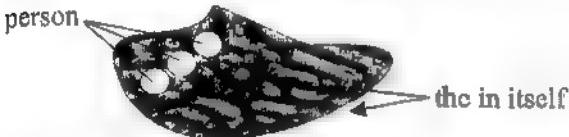


Figure 1

2. As I have pointed out on a number of occasions, according to Kant, if you look at metaphysics from the standpoint of practical reason, we have duties to other persons. Persons, then, from the standpoint of the *Critique of Practical Reason* are ultimate logical subjects. And they have duties to one another. For example, you owe me a dollar: there must be dollars, dollars which are in the domain of reality. Of course Kant would say there are dollars. Once you understand the status of the world of appearance (this is something that will have to be fleshed out as we go along) and understand what the contrast between appearance and the in itself really adds up to, the fact remains that all that Kant is saying is not that there aren't, in the real world, dollars in themselves: it is that, of these dollars, we can't give their intrinsic character — they're not spatial, they're not in time, we don't know whether they consist of monads or whether they are features of God, but at least they must be counterparts of experienced dollars.

3. It's certain metaphysical claims concerning the in itself that Kant is rejecting, not the idea that there is a correspondence, if you will, between the world of appearance and the world of reality. It's simply that we can't flesh it out except in the case of persons and, of course, God. "God,

freedom and immortality" comes along as a nice quote. But the freedom essentially is the "in-itselfness" of the individual, its independence, its "standing-on-its-own-feetness." And this Kant really believes.

4. The *Critique of Pure Reason* doesn't say this, because that involves considerations coming out of Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason*.

5. The reason that Kant stops saying "things in themselves appear to us as spatial" and so on is because we know appearances and appearances are spatial and because space and time are for him principles of individuation. And the only things that we can individuate are appearances because reality is not spatial and temporal.

6. Kant starts out by talking as if there were a lectern in itself, and he always thinks that there is a lectern in itself, but what he denies is that metaphysics can tell us the ultimate status of the lectern in itself; whether it is dependent or independent, whether it is a plurality or a singular item, whether it is a feature of God, or what. That's all he wants to say.

7. Therefore, as I said, "Relax! of course there are dollar bills in the world of the in itself." It's really a very friendly place. That's the funny thing about philosophy; after all, philosophers live in the same world, believe it or not. We often think that they don't. What they are doing is making metaphysical claims about it. So, in a certain sense, philosophy is always unexciting. You read a chapter, the next chapter, the next chapter, and you go on. What's the difference? Well, the difference is philosophical. If you're interested in philosophy, that's a tough question; if you're not, you suddenly feel just empty. So I warn you that Kant's concern with the in itself and his criticism of its knowability is very methodical.

### *B. Philosophical Knowledge of the in itself*

#### (α) affection by the in itself

8. You see the interesting thing is that Kant claims that we can know an awful lot about the in itself. People often get hung up on that. We have philosophical knowledge about the in itself. First, we know that there is the in itself, and we know what its role is. The role of the in itself is to act on itself. It generates sense impressions and we take over from there. The metaphor that I have always used is that the in itself is like sand in the ocean, and, then, sand creeps and crawls into our shells and irritates us and we construct pearls. And the world of experience is the pearl that we construct on the occasion of being acted on by the in itself. According to Kant, we know that there is the in itself but we can know of it only—

leaving aside the chief effect of it—we can know of it only what it must be like to account for there being such a thing as a public, intersubjective world of experience. He thinks that he has principles in terms of which he answers this question. Now unpacking that leads to some of the more important and difficult issues in Kant—or at least issues which have always been presented under that guise, the double affection theory and so on. Actually they are very simple correlatives.

9. I want to deal with a question about the relation between the represented and the representing in this context: that's the crucial thing because all that an act of representing requires is a content. And a content is ipso facto not something that exists in itself. One argument is that if you represent something, there must be something in formal reality, in actual existence, something which corresponds and can be called the *transcendent object* of representation. Here is an immanent object (Figure 2).

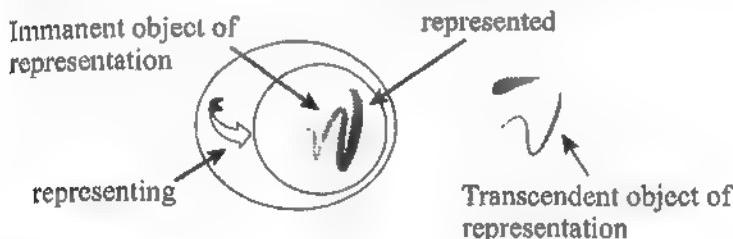


Figure 2

We cannot argue from the fact that an act of representing must have an immanent object that there must be a counterpart in independent reality. Kant doesn't argue that.

10. He's keeping the counterpart, but he's keeping away anything that we can know about it except—what? The crucial theme in Kant is a very traditional one: that we are passive in knowledge. Kant insists that we are not totally passive, but there is this theme of passivity, or, as he calls it, receptivity. So, the argument is not from the representings having contents to something corresponding to them. The argument is rather that there must be something which is responsible for generating sense impressions. And that is part of the *in itself*.

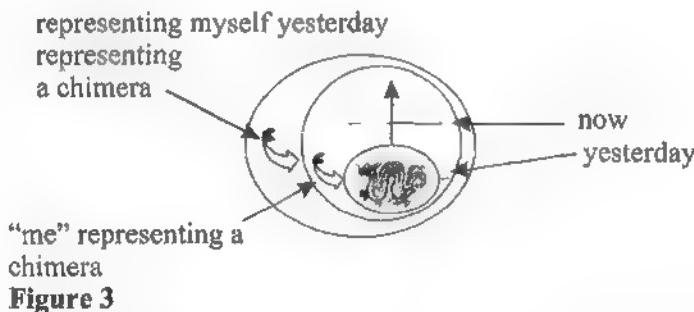
### (β) unrepresented representings

11. Another way in which the *in itself* comes in is an obvious analytic

truth: namely, that if there is something which is represented, there must be a representing of it. You might say that the represented and the representing are, in this sense, correlative. Where there is a represented (and I emphasize that this is immanent), there must be a representing. And this is like saying that where there is a husband, there must be a wife; where there is a brother, there must be a sibling. You might say, "Look at Jones, he represented yesterday." You'd say "Go on, what did he represent?" "The chimera." "Good for Jones!" He represented a chimera, but that doesn't require that there be a chimera in the external world, so to speak, in reality. But in order for there to be a represented chimera, there must be a representing of one. So this is an analytic proposition. If there are representeds, e.g., chimeras as represented, then there must be representings.

\* And representings, of course, will exist in themselves.

12. Of course you can represent a representing. For example, I might represent myself. Let's talk about it in Cartesian terms because Descartes could have brought it in right away. Suppose that I represent myself as yesterday having represented a chimera. So here (Figure 3) is the "now" that I am representing (we are talking about what I am representing independent of truth).



Here is yesterday. I'm representing yesterday and I am representing myself yesterday and I'm representing myself yesterday as representing a chimera.

13. So, you can not only represent chimeras, you can also represent yourself representing chimeras. You have nesting. Putting it in modern terms of specialized logics, you can have nesting of the context of representation. You can have a representation of a representation, a representation of a representation of a representation. But there must be, to use an old Aristotelian theme, a first mover in any such nesting. You can't go on indefinitely. I can represent myself as having represented myself as having

represented a chimera. But there must be a representing which does not itself exist as something represented. I sum that all up by saying that if there are representeds, there must be representings.

14. This representing here (Figure 4), we'll call it an *unrepresented representing*. Here in Jones' mind is an unrepresented representing, and here is a represented representing.

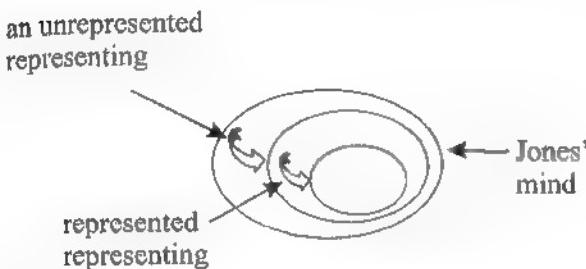
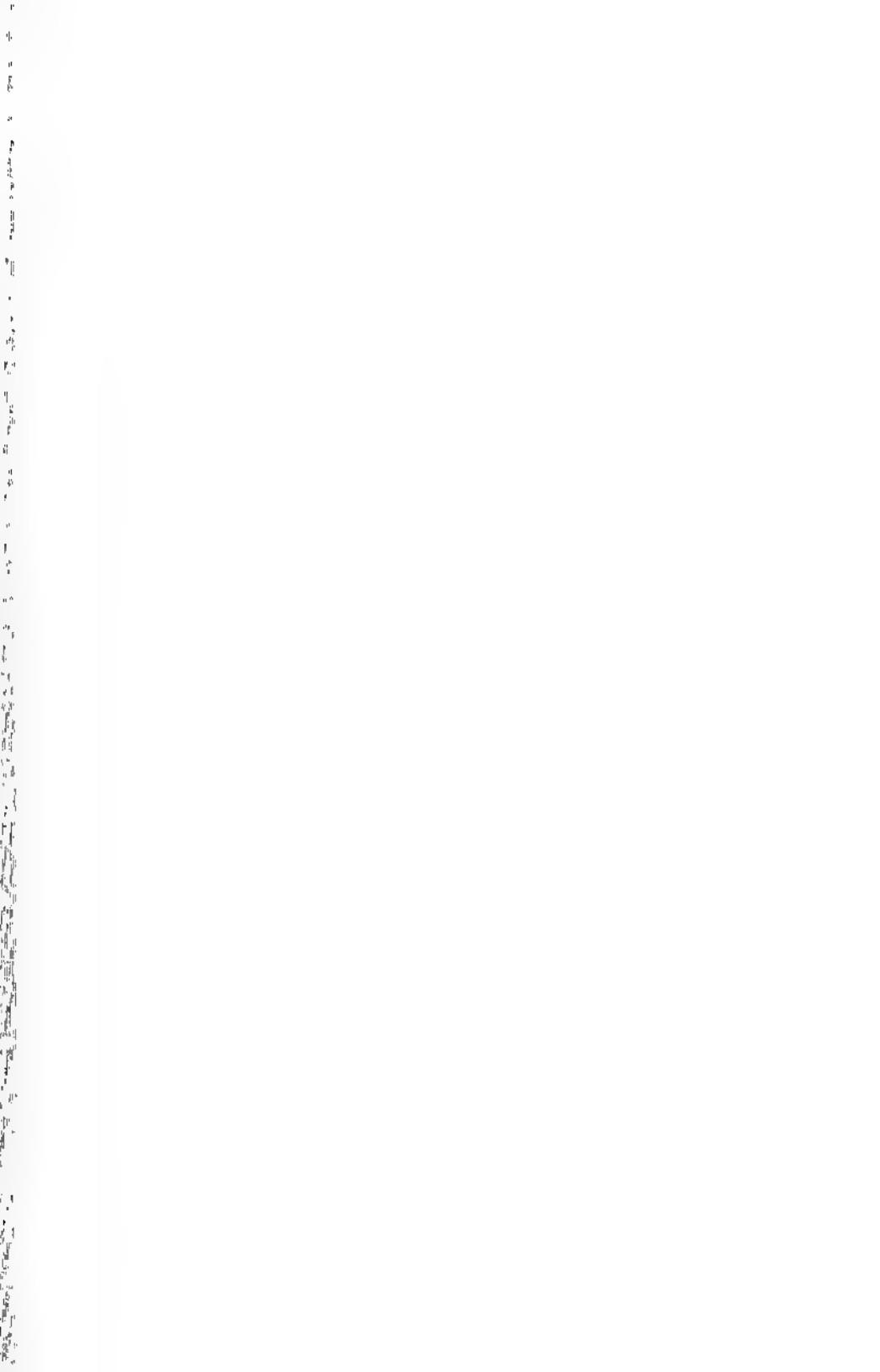


Figure 4

15. So, a basic argument to the in itself is that there must be representings in themselves which have actual being which is other than that of being something represented. Now as I said, this takes us to there being an in itself, but it doesn't take us very far. It simply takes us to acts of representing. It's the other argument that is more important. This one just, as it were, loosens us up. We have to realize that once we accept the notion of act and content of representing and represented (we don't have to: philosophers by the droves over the centuries accepted it, but we don't have to accept it), or its counterpart in contemporary theory, then it becomes an analytic truth that there is being other than being for thought.



## Chapter 11: Categories and Intuition in the Schematism and Transcendental Deduction

### A. "Single" intuition; imagination

1. Well, I have prepared myself as a provider of connective tissue and of an overall framework in terms of which we can understand Kant.
2. The key to the *Schematism* is found in the *Transcendental Deduction*. After all, the *Schematism* is the link between the very abstract argument of the *Deduction* and the specific principles, developed in the *Analytic of Principles*, that are introduced by the *Schematism*: the *Schematism* plays a very important role.
3. Let me start out by calling attention to *Observation*, §21 of the *B Deduction*:

A manifold, contained in an intuition which I call mine, is represented, by means of the synthesis of the understanding, as belonging to the *necessary* unity of self-consciousness; and this is effected by means of the category. This [requirement of a] category therefore shows that the empirical consciousness of a given manifold in a *single intuition* [emphasis, ws] is subject to a pure self-consciousness *a priori*. (B144)

Now the key is 'single intuition' because that contrasts, as I put it, a manifold of intuition with a *single* intuition of a manifold. Kant's point is that the single intuition of a manifold and, therefore, of a manifold as of a certain character, is due to the understanding and is affected through the productive imagination which he characterizes as the understanding working in consciousness.

4. 'Imagination' is the word he uses not because it connotes imagery but because imagination is always the representation of singular objects: we imagine not "houseness" but *a house*; we imagine not "landscapehood" but *a landscape*. So imagination is concerned with singulars and the understanding is concerned with singulars; that is, as synthesizing singulars, it is called the imagination.
5. Now he goes on to say,

Thus in the above proposition a beginning is made of a *deduction* of the pure concepts of understanding; and in this deduction, since the categories

have their *source* [emphasis ws] in the understanding alone, *independently of sensibility*... (B144)

(Now there he is talking about what I call the *pure-pure categories*.)

I must abstract from the mode in which the manifold for an empirical intuition is given, and must direct attention solely to the *unity* [emphasis, ws] which, in terms of the *category* [emphasis, ws], and by means of [emphasis, ws] the understanding... (B144)

(Put a big red flag beside this next phrase!)

enters *into* [emphasis, ws] the intuition. (B144)

You see, this contrast is between that which is *put into* the intuition and the judgment which can have that intuition as its subject; a good passage which emphasizes this point which was already made in the *metaphysical deduction of the categories*.<sup>1</sup>

In what follows (cf. §26) it will be shown, from the mode in which the empirical intuition is given...

It is "given" in a mode which is

no other than that which the category (according to §20) prescribes to the manifold of a given intuition in general. (B144-5)

### *B. Kinds of categories*

6. Now Kant, you see, insists that there are *a priori* categories, or really, forms of judgments, and he calls them the "pure categories." The reason for my distinction between the "pure-pure categories," the "pure categories" and the "schematized categories" concerns the fact that the *pure-pure categories* are simply the same thing as the *forms of judgment* and they apply to any subject matter: theology, mathematics, and so on. They are just the pure forms of judgment which are studied, so to speak, in formal logic.

7. The pure categories, then, are the same things, now ordered, now considered in their orientation toward a possible world to which they apply.

<sup>1</sup>A66-81/B91-116, §§9-12 Sellars alludes to B105 in particular.

That world might not be a human world; it might be a world where there were Martians, a Martian world. We want a notion of something which is still a form of judgment but a form of judgment which is, in some sense, concerned with *concreta* as opposed to *abstracta*.

8. And then the schematized categories are, of course, the forms of judgment as specified, as specialized, to a spatiotemporal world.

9. So, the pure-pure categories apply to any subject matter as opposed to pure categories which are applying to concreta. Pure categories apply to objects in a world, but one which may not be specified as a spatiotemporal world. Then there are the schematized categories. Well, even Martians have to schematize if their categories are to apply to their world but, of course, they don't have our spatiotemporal forms of experience. They would schematize their categories in terms of other sensible forms. Here we have the pure categories (Figure 1).

↳ what other? Could there be other forms?

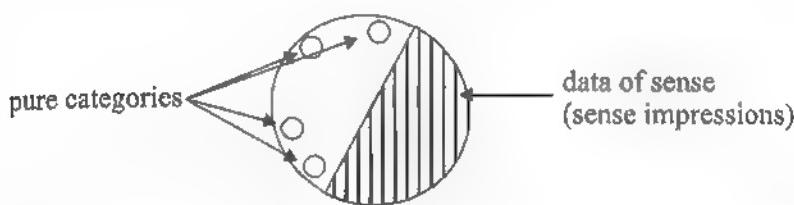


Figure 1

10. When I talk about *schematized categories*, I will usually mean human schematized categories, schematized categories of humans.

### C. Abstraction, sense impressions, and categories

11. Now let's look at the *Schematism*. Why does he set it up in the way he does? He has in mind, dialectically, a host of predecessors and contemporaries. Consider, for example, an empiricist. An empiricist holds that the mind is confronted with the data of the senses: sense impressions. What Kant calls the manifold of sense is now talked about in a philosophical way: sense impressions (Figure 1).

12. Kant insisted that concept empiricism, in the strict sense, is committed to the idea that we can form concepts by abstraction from sense: I

mean from *sensation*, from sense impressions.<sup>2</sup> He is rejecting that Categories do not derive from sense impressions, from the data of the senses.

13. The problem that he poses is put in a deliberately generic sort of way so that he can make clear how his position differs from the empiricist. He sets down, in the first paragraph, the following condition when he says:

In all subsumptions of an object under a concept the representation of the object must be *homogeneous* with the concept; in other words, the concept must contain something which is represented in the object that is to be subsumed under it. This, in fact, is what is meant by the expression, 'an object is contained under a concept'. Thus the empirical concept of a *plate* is homogeneous with the pure geometrical concept of a *circle*. The roundness which is thought in the latter can be intuited in the former. (A137/B176)

Now, he goes on to say,

But pure concepts of understanding being quite heterogeneous from empirical intuitions, and indeed from all sensible intuitions, can never be met with in any intuition. For no one will say that a category, such as that of causality, can be intuited through sense and is itself contained in appearance. How, then, is the *subsumption* of intuitions under pure concepts, the *application* of a category to appearances, possible? (A137-8/B176-7)

14. Then, it seems, in the following passage, as though he were looking for a third thing. It is as though the category were homogeneous with time because they are both pure and as though time (the representation of time) were homogeneous with the experienced items because experienced items are temporal. It looks as though Kant were making a howler and concluding

<sup>2</sup>Sellars identifies Locke as a defender of Concept Empiricism—defined as a theory of concept formation that contrasts with Innatism. Hume, on the other hand, Sellars regarded as a Judgment Empiricist (one who denied that there were any synthetic a priori truths and contrasted with the Rationalists who believe in the existence of synthetic a priori). Locke, on this view, can be both a Concept Empiricist and a Rationalist. Central to the empiricist's position on concept formation is the insistence that we come to have our concepts of simple qualities by having sensations of simple qualities. When we ask, "what is the relation between understanding and sense?", the best answer that Locke can give involves the idea that we find some sort of mental activity directed upon sensation which takes a quality from the domain of sensation or sense and transfers it to the understanding. Concepts of things are explained in terms of our experience of instances of those concepts. On the other hand, the ability to have sensations of simple qualities, the ability to compare sensations, to abstract from them and so on, all of these are innate. Cf. *Science and Metaphysics*, ch. I, ¶72.

that, therefore, the category is homogeneous with experienced items. If it were argued that

the category is homogeneous with time because time is pure, and

time is homogeneous with experienced objects because they are temporal,

therefore, the category is homogeneous with experienced objects,

that would be a non-sequitur. That is obviously not what Kant has in mind: Kant is not that deficient in his logical sense.

15. Now take seriously the example with which he starts:

the representation of a plate

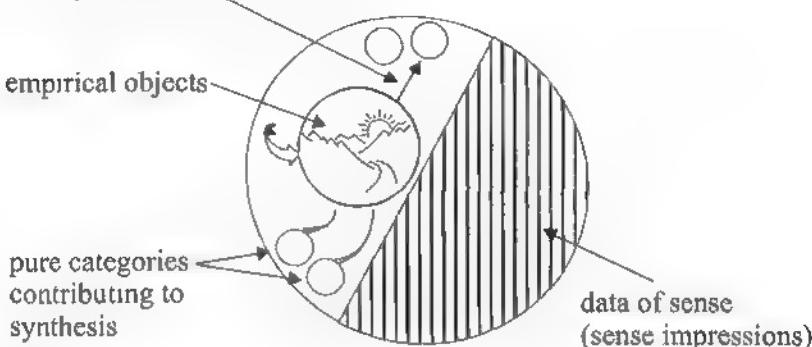
and

the concept of a circle.

That is his paradigm of homogeneity—of the homogeneity of which he is talking. Of course, the representation of a plate includes the representation of a circle; I mean, a plate is a circle. So that, obviously, if Kant is to follow through this paradigm, the categories must be *contained* in the empirical representation.<sup>3</sup> But then why does Kant say that the categories are not contained in empirical *intuitions*? That is because of the dialectical situation. After all, he is agreeing with the empiricist that his categories are not contained in sense impressions, but they are contained in appearances, i.e., empirical representations. The whole point of the discussion is to distinguish between sense impressions and empirical objects (Figure 2).

<sup>3</sup>The sense in which Kant wants to say that representations contain categories differs radically from that found in the empiricist tradition. Naturally, empirical objects do not exist without being represented but, in opposition to Berkeley, that doesn't mean they are phenomenal.

abstraction from a representation through transcendental reflection



**Figure 2**

16. Roughly, the empiricist equates sense impressions and empirical objects, or congeries of sense impressions with empirical objects. This, then, is the dialectical situation, Kant wants to force us to realize that empirical objects, or, I should say, representations of them, are not the same things as sense impressions. He is agreeing with the empiricists that the categories are not contained in sense impressions. They are not contained in the manifold of sense.

17. The whole point of Kant's discussion in the transcendental deduction has been to distinguish between our representation of empirical objects and *mere* sense impressions. Sense impressions are passive. The world doesn't tell us what it is. It doesn't carry its cognitive heart on its sleeve, you see. Kant is drawing a distinction between representations of empirical objects, such as a chair, a table and so on, and mere sense impressions. For Berkeley and for Hume, in contrast, a table simply is a congeries of sense impressions.<sup>4</sup>

18. Roughly, the argument in the *Transcendental Deduction* has been

<sup>4</sup> Sellars finds two different readings of Hume (in the *Treatise*) on physical objects. they are bundles of impressions, or they are bundles of color particles. Hume agrees with Berkeley that color and shape are inseparable, and that the *esse* of color and shape, is *percept*. Their primary mode of existence is as contents of sense impressions. As pointed out earlier, in Hume the impression of a red triangle can be: a sense impression of a red triangle, a red triangle, a belief that there is a red triangle here now. It is an interesting confusion in the theory of mind because it follows, on one reading, that the mind consists of red triangles. Sellars was fond of pointing out that, for Hume, the impression of a complex is conflated with a complex of impressions. Since basic impressions are of "simples" (simple qualities), the visual field is treated as a huge number of colored points. Hume thinks that a red triangle consists of colored points. How do the colored point impressions add up to a red-triangle impression? It cannot be in virtue of spatial relations between color point impressions. See *Science and Metaphysics*, ch. 1, ¶65-71.

that the categories apply to empirical objects—to represented empirical objects that is—because represented empirical objects are synthesized (Figure 2). This kind of representation is synthesized. This is to be carefully distinguished from the *sheer manifold* which the world impresses upon us. All we have in the *Schematism* is a spelling out of that passage which is the key to the metaphysical deduction in B105. As Kant puts it,

- The same function which gives unity to the various representations *in a judgment* also gives unity to the mere synthesis of various representations *in an intuition*; and this unity, in its most general expression, we entitle the pure concept of the understanding. The same understanding, through the same operations by which in concepts, by means of analytical unity, it produced the logical form of a judgment, also *introduces* [emphasis, ws] a transcendental content [element] into its representations, [this it establishes] by means of the synthetic unity of the manifold in intuition in general. (B105) [additions, ws]

That is exactly what Kant has said in the passages with which I began this lecture: that is, the *Deduction* and the *Schematism* simply spell out what Kant has put there in B105.

#### D. Pure categories and schematized categories

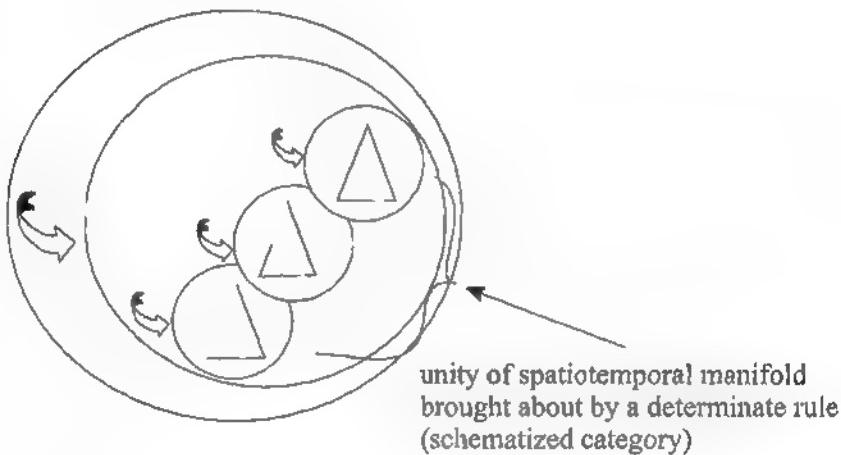
19. Talking to the empiricist, Kant says, "Ah, ha! Look I have been emphasizing that the categories are in no way derived from experience." Well, you see, "experience, smakesperience": that is a very broad word. What he is saying is: "of course they are not derived from sense impressions. I agree with you there, but sense impressions are not to be confused with the objects of empirical knowledge." The objects of empirical knowledge are indeed such that the categories apply to them.

20. But now what Kant wants to emphasize is that these pure-pure categories like the logical notions of "all," "some," "not," "and," "or"—Kant doesn't do justice to "and" by the way—these very purest categories apply to anything, mathematics and so on. They seem to be so vacuous: how can they apply to empirical objects? Well, I put it, you remember, this way: the pure categories are categories that are involved in thoughts about *concreta*—objects which exist in the world—as contrasted with abstract entities. *Concreta* are items in space and time, or something like space and time; that is what the word 'concrete' carries with it.

21. The classical notion of definition is in terms of genus, difference

and species. And you get a good grip on what Kant has in mind in the *Schematism* by thinking of the pure categories as very abstract modes of synthesis of objects: objects must be singularized, having a complexity which is unified, and so on; any object you think of must have some kind of internal structure by means of which it is a whole of parts which are related and so on. So, the pure categories do involve this notion of the unity of a many. But not necessarily of a spatiotemporal many.

22. You should think of the schematized categories as specifications of the pure categories; they are to be thought of as ways in which we think of spatiotemporal manifolds, "unities" consisting of spatiotemporal manifolds constituting a world (Figure 3).



**Figure 3**

23. Remember, Kant isn't proving that there is a world. He is analyzing what is involved in the *thought* of a world. The schematized categories are in thoughts of spatiotemporal concreta making up a world. So you might think of the schemata as the differentia. We have the general idea of *species = genus + differentia* (Figure 4). Well, the schemata can be regarded as the differentia which bring in the specific spatiotemporal context. The schematized categories are simply the ways in which we think of concreta belonging to a world which is a spatiotemporal world.

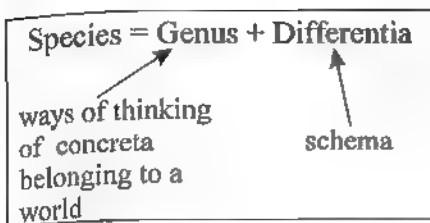


Figure 4

*E. Constructables and synthesis; categories and abstraction*

24. The key always is that we *become aware* of a unified manifold by virtue of constructing it. Objects are constructables for Kant. That there are lots of objects in this world which nobody has ever constructed is something which we will have to come terms with. But now, Kant is analyzing the notion that "if something is a constructable, what is it to construct it"? If something is a constructable, then, essentially, we can only know it by constructing a representation of it.

25. Look at *Schematism* (A141/B180)—no, let's look A162/B203 in the *axioms of intuition*. (This is really a meta-axiomatic thesis; it is a principle as to how it is possible that there are axioms of intuition. It is not an axiom of intuition because Kant is proving it and you don't prove axioms.) Kant says,

I entitle a magnitude extensive when the representation of the parts makes possible, and therefore necessarily precedes, the representation of the whole. *I cannot represent to myself a line, however small, without drawing it in thought*, that is, generating from a point [and this contains a promissory note as I pointed out] all its parts one after another. (A162-3/B203) [italics and addition, ws]

Now the idea that he has in mind is that you start with a point and then you generate a line by virtue of some unit, putting it crudely, an inch or whatever. Then you can think of a determinate line (or a plane) which will be generated. That is the connection between the comment on drawing a line and then drawing a determinate magnitude that involves the notion of a unit. Kant says that this involves the counting aspect.

26. We have the concept of a circle and the representation of a plate. Why does the concept of a circle apply to the represented plate? Because the representation of a plate already involves the concept of a circle. Well, Kant's point really is again: why does the concept of substance, and so on,

apply to an object of experience? Because the representation of the object already contains the categories. It doesn't contain it merely in these very abstract forms of "substance," "attribute" and the like, in the sense in which nonsensible objects and nonspatial objects can be substances, but it contains it in this very specialized way. Although Kant has already insisted that any representation of something involves synthesis, the stress here is that the mode of synthesis involved in any pure category is, in the case of human experience, specialized to spatiotemporal concreta.

27. The activity of synthesis involves the spatiotemporal and, in particular, the temporal because he is still trying to discuss synthesis in a way which applies to nonextended objects, like minds, as well as to extended objects. At A138/B177, he says,

Obviously there must be some third thing, which is homogenous on the one hand with the category, and on the other hand with the *appearance* [emphasis, *ws*], and which makes the application of the former to the latter possible. This mediating representation must be pure, that is, void of all empirical content, and yet at the same time, while it must in one respect be *intellectual*, it must in another be *sensible*. (A138/B177)

And again the important thing is that we are dealing with an *appearance* like a chair. We cannot say that Kant is arguing that this works because the category is a pure intellectual representation, and time is pure, and time applies to experience (because it is temporal), thus accusing Kant of supposing fallaciously that this entails that the category applies to temporal objects. The point is that the pure category itself involves the notion of an activity of synthesis. It is involved in it *qua* intellectual because even the representation of a number involves synthesis, or even the representation of an angel involves synthesis.

28. So, we have the idea of synthesis *already* in the pure category. The point is, however, that the notion of synthesis is a generic notion and what the schema does is to tell us what synthesis is like when it concerns a spatiotemporal world. I think you can understand, then, that Kant is agreeing with the empiricists that you cannot get categories from the manifold of sense. (Of course, the empiricists tended to say, "kick the categories out." Leave that aside.) Kant doesn't deny that in a sense that we can get the categories from an empirical object: "why can we get the categories by abstraction from empirical objects?"—because we have already put them in there, you see.

29. That is why, the introduction to the *Transcendental Deduction*, he

can speak of Locke<sup>5</sup> as an eminent physiologist of the understanding. What he says is that good old John Locke thought we could get the categories (you know Locke came before Hume and Hume's devastating attack) from empirical objects by abstraction; he had an abstractionist theory of the categories. That is what Hume jumped on. Remember Locke said, we observe one object bang another and therefore "collect" the idea of power. Heh.<sup>6</sup> Well, that was one of the passages which shows that Locke was in tune with the common sense of his time but when it came to philosophical dialectic, he just wasn't up to it and Hume realized that. The trouble was that Hume enjoyed taking his predecessors apart so much that he took himself apart.

30. O.k. So Kant doesn't want to deny that, from our experience of a chair, we can abstract the concept of substance. Of course we can. Or that from our experience of an event, we can abstract the idea of causality—of course he does. Or that from our experience of resistance, we can collect the idea of resistential force. He doesn't deny any of this. All that he is saying is that we can abstract these interesting philosophical ideas from objects as we experience them because objects as we experience them have been constructed in terms of the schematized categories.

31. But then he has insisted that you must not confuse objects, the objects of experience from which we can abstract the categories, and sense

<sup>5</sup>B127.

Sellars was amused by Locke's concept empiricism. Its fundamental theme concerns concept formation: the formation of abilities to think of qualities, relations, and kinds although there are also concepts of things that are not among these, for example, logical concepts (it was not clear to the empiricist that there were such concepts). Their view was: take care of the simple and the complex will take care of itself. The complex is simply a matter of putting simples together. So, they attempted to explain our ability to think of simples. Within this group, qualities were taken as primary and paradigmatic. If concept formation of quality-concepts could be understood, they reasoned that it would be easy to account for kinds and relations. Among the qualities, simple qualities were taken as primary. The empiricist thesis was stated in reference to simple qualities. What does Locke mean by 'simple idea'? The theme is that sense impressions were modeled on physical objects: a special use of adjectives whose primary use comes with the rich conceptual framework of physical objects. By the time of Hume, substance and cause had dropped out of the descriptions of impressions. It is important to realize the refinement that has occurred in going from the ordinary notion of sensation to Hume's impressions. Berkeley had already pushed sense impressions down to sheer impressions themselves. You wouldn't say, "I heard a person lurking behind the corner" (exactly the sort of thing the Empiricist is committed to, according to Sellars).

Locke cheated, when he talks about power; he says, roughly, "when I see a ball hit another, I collect the idea of power." He talks as if you can go from the content of sensation to the idea of power. At the conceptual level, the simple idea is tied up with definability. At the sensory level, we have sense impressions of individuals that have no parts, impressions of colored points. Simplicity means no parts. The sense impression of a red triangle consists of points—extended items must consist of points. A sense impression of a complex must consist of sense impressions of simples. The act/content model has difficulty with the simple/complex distinction. How do the simple contents add up to one big complex?

impressions from which we cannot. That is why Kant dialectically puts his points as he does here. We can abstract the categories from our cognitive representations because we put them in our representations. Roughly, substance is in the representation of a chair because we put it there just as circularity is in our representation of a plate because we put it there.

#### *F. The point of the transcendental deduction*

32. What about the concept chair? Do we put it in the representation in the way that we put in the concept of substance? My answer to that would be that we do, but that requires a gloss.

33. Suppose I represent something as a chair: I represent it as "that chair." The crucial thing to remember is that the fundamental character of the perceptual judgment has the form of

[Intuition] is  $\Phi$ .

"This chair is made by Gallsworthy."

The intuition goes into the subject term here so that the categories are there only because some empirical specification of the category is there.

34. I was discussing this in explaining the *Transcendental Deduction*. As Kant says, his aim in the *Transcendental Deduction* is not to "prove" anything. Most of the literature, including Norman Kemp Smith, valiantly deals with premises and conclusions, but it is beside the point. Roughly, Kant is trying to show that the categories apply to objects we represent. To show that categories apply you have to look both at the categories, as to what they are, and then you have to look at the representations of objects to see what they are. When Kant talks about from "up-down" and from "down-up," he is not talking about two different proofs; he is simply saying that in order to show that these two things are congruent you have to look at this and see that it applies to that and then you have to look at this and see that it is that to which the other applies. (Figure 5) This is essentially the ground to this nice metaphor between *up to down* and *down to up*.

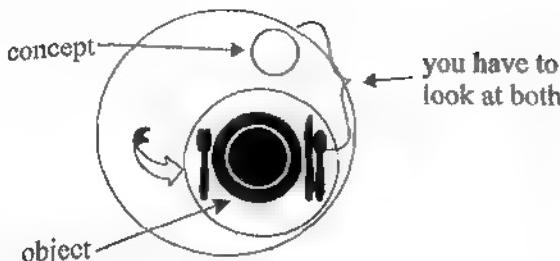


Figure 5

35. Anyway, why does the concept of the circle apply to our representation of a particular plate? It is because the concept of the circle is involved in the representation of a plate. Now, you see, I am emphasizing the difference between the intuition and the judgment. The empirical intuition of this chair already involves the categories because to represent a chair is to represent a part of nature. To be a chair is a way of being a part of nature.<sup>7</sup>

36. People never judge, but philosophers judge, "this chair is a substance." Indeed. We use the category as a predicate. What I am emphasizing is that the intuition to which the predicate is applied in the judgment already involves the categorial content because being a chair is a way of being a substance. So, abstractly considered, the intuition has, as one aspect, the form "this substance" and the judgment has the form "this substance is a substance". That is the outcome of the transcendental deduction. And I emphasize this again because it is such a salutary way of freeing oneself from the usual picture of what Kant is trying to do in the deduction.

37. Take a look at A128. If you have taken my advice, you have already put a red flag there; but put another one to remind you of what an important point it is.<sup>8</sup> Starting with line six, he says,

This is *all* that we were called upon to establish in the transcendental deduction of the categories, namely, to render *comprehensible* this relation of understanding to sensibility, and, by means of sensibility, to all objects of experience. [emphasis, ws] (A128)

And remember earlier on (A96) he had said, at the beginning when he is

<sup>7</sup> An empirical object, a plate, is "drawn," that is, represented, in space and time in such a way that the successive representations are guided by principles of construction.

<sup>8</sup> Sellars often asked that key passages of the text get marked with a bugle. Indeed, my copy has two bugles at this point.

just getting under way,

The concepts which thus contain *a priori* the pure thought involved in every experience, we find in the categories [emphasis, ws] (A96)

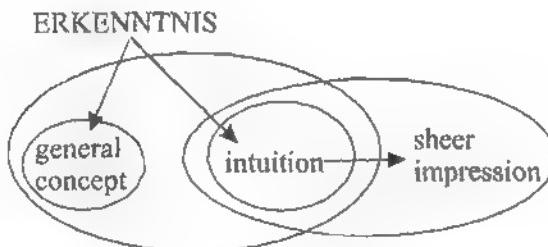
Now, you should have a flag there already, but put another one.<sup>9</sup>

If we can prove by their means alone an object can be thought, this will be a sufficient deduction of them, and will justify their objective validity. (A97)

And of course again, the aim of the deduction is to show that if you distinguish carefully between the manifold of sense and the representation of an object, you will see that the categories are simply "concepts of an object" as he calls them, the pure concept of an object. So that just in the sense in which the concept of the circle applies to the representation of a plate, so the concept of substance applies to the representation of any object.

### (α) Some questions

38. Consider the question raised: "Is Kant trying to distinguish conceptual from non-conceptual representing?"



**Figure 6**

What Kant wants to do (Figure 6) is draw a distinction between what he calls "Erkenntnis" (which include general conceptual representations of objects and also intuitions which are singular and belong to what we would call the conceptual order) and then sensation. So that there is really a threefold distinction.

<sup>9</sup>A97. Sure enough, my copy has two bugs by it.

39. What Kant wants to do is to draw a parallel distinction between intuitions and sensations. He is arguing that traditional philosophers—I am not talking about Locke only, take the Aristotelians too—had confused between sheer sensation and the perceptual, immediate, representation of a concrete object.<sup>10</sup> Kant wants to say that by obscuring this, empiricism, in the silly sense, was possible. Because Kant agrees with Aristotle that if you mean by perceptual representation the representation of this chair, then of course you can get the categories out of it. Of course, if you confuse between that and sheer passivity, then you can't and that was the point of my initial discussion. It was to draw exactly that distinction.

40. Now Kant himself is not happy in his formulation of that distinction because he starts out to talk about sheer sensation as though it were intuition: he speaks of a “manifold of intuitions.” So a tremendous burden is carried by the distinction between a “manifold of intuition” and an “intuition of a manifold,” a unitary intuition of a manifold. Kant, in a way, had yet to get a terminology which neatly handles this distinction.

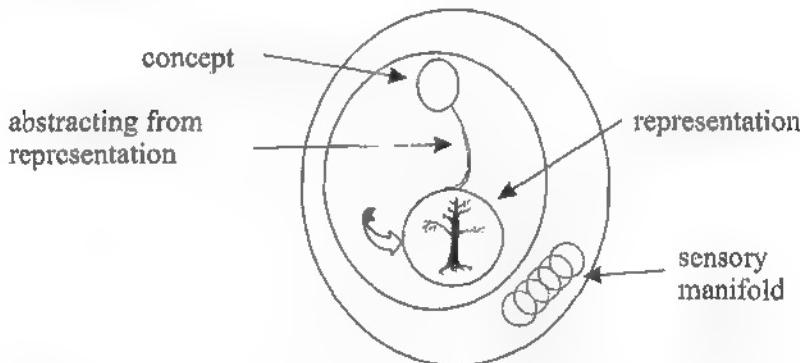
<sup>10</sup> Sellars describes the fictitious character Loeke-Plato to capture the sense in which Loeke is not a Platonist but is within the tradition. It helps to be acquainted with this character. To apprehend the universal, Redness, we must do so in an instance (a particular that exemplifies redness), a fact that contains Redness and a particular (since Redness is not any “where” or any “when”). For the Platonist, while Redness is a constituent of the fact, henceforth, after the apprehension, you have access to Redness, independently of the fact. Locke-Plato holds that we become aware of content universals, such as Redness, by virtue their being instanced. We can sketch a corresponding theory of knowledge. There is a sense in which Loeke belongs to the classical tradition of a priori knowledge and holds the Rationalist framework of a priori knowledge. According to it, when apprehending the fact that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points, one apprehends straightfulness or linearity and shortest-distance they are constituents of the fact that are “connected.” The line is apprehended as having a certain character, for example, linearity, that is “being linear”. Loeke-Plato really means “implication” by this connection (“incompatibility” means disagreement between ideas, or as Plato would say, “difference”). Knowledge of the items “is a straight line” and “is shortest distance between two points” allows one to grasp the implication, it entails that the connection exists independently of mind (what exemplifies one, will exemplify the other). Concept formation depends on experience initially (it leads to apprehension), but thereafter we have a special knowledge that is non-inductive. We know there are no exceptions. This is a priori knowledge. The theory is Platonic in the sense that it carries over the notion of an *absolutely objective apprehension* of the forms that allows for a cognitive grip on all relationships. It apprehends a connection that is independent of any experience: intuitive knowledge of simple natures. We can believe in a priori knowledge and still be an empiricist in concept formation. The Concept Empiricist claims a connection between, say, color and extension, that is, there exists an “agreement” between the ideas of each: a packaged deal, one includes the other. Concept Empiricists believed that this agreement had instances. Loeke’s ontology of conceptualism extends the connection between content universals to an implication relation (i.e., a concept content connection) between ideas that doesn’t guarantee there is any real existence. so, there is a sense in which a priori knowledge of real existence is hypothetical. Loeke is talking about ideas in terms of *contents* that are connected (corresponding to Plato’s view that universals are connected). Thus, the idea of the a priori is built not on conceptualism, but on direct platonism. Knowledge is perception of agreement or disagreement of ideas, it is the grasping of necessary connections between abstracta.

41. He tends to use the word "conceptual" in more general contexts applying to the predicate of judgment. The crucial thing is that Kant does draw the distinction between intuition as *Erkenntnis*: as representation of this object, and as sheer sensory manifolds.

42. Let me answer the question, "How does this relate specifically to Locke's vacillation between two models of abstraction?"<sup>11</sup> Well, let's turn back to B127 where Kant says,

The illustrious Locke, failing to take account of these considerations, and meeting with pure concepts of the understanding in experience, deduced them also from experience.... (B127)

Locke held, on the one hand, that abstraction is abstraction from a given representation (Figure 7).



**Figure 7**

But, he tends to conflate this with abstraction according to which one is abstracting from an actual case, that is, from existent cases. Which is to say that abstraction works on what we have been calling sheer sense impressions and not representations (Figure 8). Locke's account becomes incoherent because he presents one model of abstraction and then proceeds to philosophize upon the basis of the other.

<sup>11</sup> See Appendix, Locke.

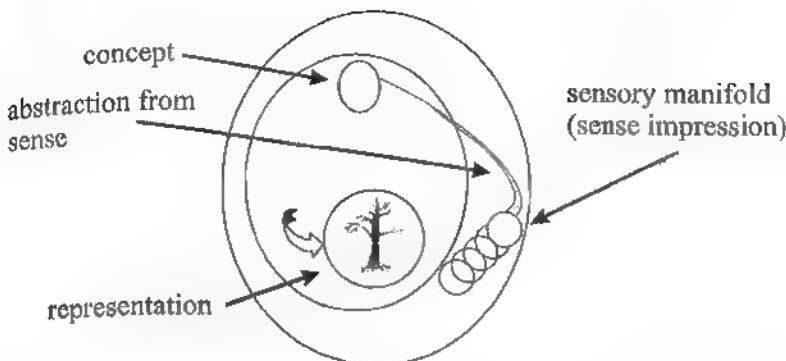


Figure 8

43. Kant does bow in Locke's direction, calling him the "well-known" and an "excellent physiologist" of the understanding. In other words, Kant is prepared to say that we form our concept by abstraction from the experience of objects. But, you see, he says that Locke misses the point and he implies also that Aristotle misses the point because our experience of objects already involves the activity of the mind using the categories. Now we will grant that Kant is an abstractionist but that from which he abstracts already involves the activity of the understanding and the productive imagination and it has already put the contents in there which it pulls out. Jack Horner made the pie from which he pulls out the plum; that is Kant's point, whereas the traditional view was that nature makes the pie, puts the plums in it, and all we have to do is to pull the plums out.<sup>12</sup>

44. My point is that to the question of the transcendental deduction, "How do categories apply to our representation of thises?", Kant's answer is, of course, they apply to them because they are principles in terms of which we construct our representations of those objects. And he said, that is because we must distinguish between a sheer manifold of intuition and the intuition of a manifold as being of a structured whole. So that is the very abstract formulation of the *Deduction*. What I pointed out is that he spells this out in terms of the generic idea that the categories, even the most abstract categories, are principles of synthesis and involve the idea of

<sup>12</sup> Little Jack Horner was another favorite of Sellars' especially when criticizing the model of Locke's abstractionism in which Locke treats a conceptual representation as if, through it, one could stick in a mental thumb and pull out a concept. Since Berkeley had an element of William of Champaix in his theory of particulars (the "ultimate" constituents of particulars were not individuals but "determinables" in W. E. Johnson's sense), Sellars sometimes remarked that Berkeley was also committed to the view that the constituents of ideas were "universal" in the sense in which "determinables" were such.

"ones," of "manys," belonging to a system. Then, in the *Schematism*, he says, "well, let's cash this out in terms of the experience of a spatio-temporal world" and so the very abstract principles of synthesis Kant specifies in terms of time.

45. From the Kantian point of view, the Aristotelian is confusing between something that is actually a representation of an individual, depending on the activities of the mind working through some stimulus, and the sheer sensory input. The Aristotelian did confuse these two and, as I said, the Aristotelians did think that nature is presenting us with the cooked pie and all we have to do is stick our thumb into it and pull out a plum. The point is that nature in some sense presents us with sheer sensory input and then, in some sense, we bake a pie unconsciously and then we put in our thumb and pull out a plumb. So, in a sense, Kant can be an abstractionist in that he holds that certain concepts, chair, table, and so on are formed by abstraction from experience but that the experience from which they are formed is not sheer congeries of passive sensations. Sensation as such is necessary to knowledge but it is not, as such, a special case of knowledge.

46. That is why Humean scepticism is generated. Hume thinks of a sense impression of a red triangle as something which somehow says "I am a red triangle." For Kant, you see, a sense impression as the sheer impact of reality on us doesn't declare anything; it just provides the occasion on which we proceed to construct the triangle.

47. People are still subject to the *myth of the given* and the myth of the given, as I defined it in "Empiricism and the Philosophy of the Mind," is the notion that objects present themselves to us as being of a certain sort or as being of a certain kind.<sup>13</sup> OK. Well that is some connective tissue.

<sup>13</sup>"Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind," (EPM (31), reprinted in SPR (53)).

## Chapter 12: Judging; Objective Validity and Association

### A. Questions about concepts and judgments

1. The point of the question is: Kant, it seems, frequently uses the word 'concept' in a sense unfamiliar to us. Since we cognize objects through concepts (B93), a conceptus (in the sense in which 'conceptus' means a conceiving) is a consciousness of the determinate relationship of given representations to an object. In the conceptus, the manifold of given representations is united: e.g., "I see a fir, a willow, a linden and attending to their differences, I become conscious of their similarities, thus the concept "tree" which applies to all of them arises."<sup>1</sup> The content "tree" specifies sequences of representings which count as coming to represent a tree.

2. Let me gloss the word 'conceptus'. Kant himself says,

See -  
having

The word 'concept' might of itself suggest this remark. For this unitary consciousness is what combines the manifold, successively intuited, and thereupon also reproduced, into one representation. (A103)

The German word is 'Begriff' which is very closely related to 'begreifen' ('to grab'). So this is one passage in which Kant himself brings out that traditional force of 'concept'.

3. Of course, here, Kant is concerned with activity of the mind and he uses the word 'concept' in a way which doesn't fit neatly into his other discussion of concepts as essential terms in judgments. What he is really talking about here is the way in which we form a unitary intuition out of the sheer manifold. So, this is a very important passage both for its bearing on the notion of what synthesis is and for its bearing on the traditional use of concept.

4. Question from Amaral: So what you are saying is that his use of the word 'concept' here is different from his use of the word when talking about the relation of concepts in a judgment?

Well, if you remember, I have been emphasizing the difference

<sup>1</sup>The context occurs in Kant's *Logic*, Part I, General Doctrine of Elements, §6, Note 1 (see also B318).

between the sheer manifold and, as it were, the creation by the mind of a unified intuition, a single intuition of a many. The word 'concept' here is treated as referring to the process of synthesizing, not judgments, but the very intuitions which are to be the ultimate subjects to judgments. So, as I said, this is a passage I was reminded of by your comment on the "process-product" ambiguity. This is one place where Kant really comes out and explicitly says the word 'concept' has the implication of a process or it might, in fact, indicate the successful completion of a process. 'Begreifen' means roughly "to grab"; a "grabbing together"—that's the metaphor he is using in this present paragraph.

5. Question from Amaral: Kant, in section 19 of the *B Deduction*, claims that his theory of judgment differs from the traditional account—specifically with regard to categorical judgment. He, while accepting the definition that the categorical judgment is the relating by the mind of two concepts, denies that the traditional theory provided an adequate account of what the precise nature of that relation turned out to be. Naturally Ockham, for example, could not have agreed more. The latter would say that the copula 'is' signified the conjunction by the mind and that to that extent 'is' had simple supposition which is to say that it is a syncategorematic term which "functioned in the office of a little chain" as Junge<sup>2</sup> would say. In short, it signified the unificatory activity of the mind. Yet Kant wants to tell us exactly how judgment differs from the mere association of ideas. Is this not correct?

Well, there is very little of what you have said with which I can take exception and, indeed, your comments provide an excellent context in which I can develop the ideas I wanted to get before the house today. I propose to relate Kant's discussion (in section 19 to which you correctly referred) of what judgment, as it were, *really* is when it comes to a theory of knowledge to what he actually does in the *Principles* because I think section 19 is the key to the *Analogy*s. I want to discuss how that sounds like a leap but actually it isn't because the *Analogy*s take seriously that the forms of thought (the categories as forms of thought) are, in knowledge specified not only to a manifold (because, as Kant points out, even in the *pure-pure* forms the categories concern a unity of a manifold in a very abstract way), but to a specific kind of a manifold: namely a manifold which is spatiotemporal or, as he emphasizes, particularly in the first edition, a temporal manifold.

<sup>2</sup> Joachim Junge, *Logica Hamburgensis*.

*B. Section 19 of the B deduction: "relations" between concepts*

6. What is going on in section 19? Let me build a bit more on that section. To quote again:

I have never been able to accept the interpretation which logicians give of judgment in general. It is, they declare, the representation of a relation between two concepts. I do not here dispute with them as to what is defective in this interpretation... (B140)

And then he says,

I need only point out that the definition does not determine in what the asserted *relation* consists. (B141)

7. Now, the word 'relation' is one of those "accordion words" on which you can play lots of music. In his Table of Categories, he has the category of "relation" and listed there are "of Inherence and Subsistence, *substantia et accidentis*" (A80/B106). It is very important to note that, here, the word 'relation' is not to be interpreted as we might speak of a temporal relation or a spatial relation, being next to or above or after or so on. That word 'relation' here is obviously being used in a sense which pertains to the syncategorematics of traditional logic.

8. In the end of the *First Analogy*, Kant comments on this in a way which I think is very important to take into mind because, when he talks about "substance" and "inherence," it looks as though he is using 'relation' (or, 'substance' and 'accident') as if it stands for a kind of relation that belongs in the same general family as spatial relations or temporal relations between substances. However, the passage at the end of the *First Analogy* can be viewed as evidence of Kant's awareness that when he is speaking of this cognized relation, he is employing a metaphorical, or analogical, extension of the word 'relation' as it might normally be used in speaking of spatial or temporal relations. Thus he says,

The determinations of a substance, which are nothing but special ways in which it exists, ... [emphasis, ws]

(Note that phrase "nothing but special ways in which it exists.")

are called *accidents*. (A186/B229)

Take note of this passage in reference to the key notion of "relation" as used in the Table of Categories.

If we ascribe a special [kind of] existence to this real in substance (for instance, to motion, as an accident of matter), this existence is entitled *inherence* [emphasis, *ws*], in distinction from the existence of substance which is entitled its subsistence. (A186-7/B229-230)

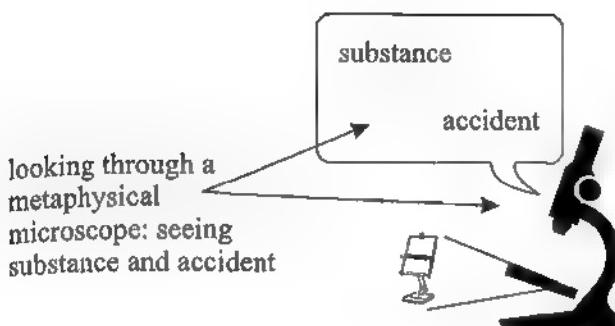
Now he says,

But this occasions many misunderstandings; it is more exact and more correct to describe an accident as being simply the way in which the existence of a substance is positively determined. (A187/B230)

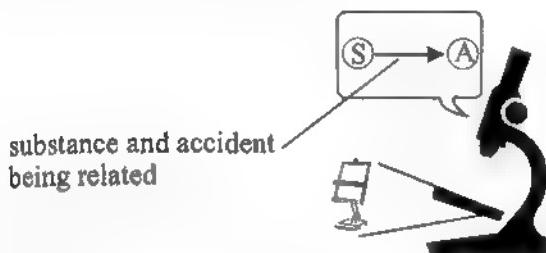
Notice the "adverbial" kind of language here: an accident is simply the "manner" in which a substance exists.

But since it is unavoidable, owing to the conditions of the logical employment or our understanding, to separate off, as it were, that which in the existence of a substance can change while the substance still remains, and to view this variable element in relation to the truly permanent and radical, this category has to be assigned place among the categories of relation, but rather as the *condition* of relations than as itself containing a relation (A187/B230) [emphasis, *ws*].

9. In other words, he doesn't know quite what to come up with in the way of, you might say, a theory of predication, but he is warning us against thinking of things and their qualities as terms of a straightforward relation between two items: namely, a subject and another item which is an accident (as we might have a temporal relation or a spatial relation like the book *being on* the desk). We tend to construe, or to reify, what we predicate of a thing. We tend to reify it into an entity. We might have a book and the lectern. We look at things in terms of a metaphysical microscope; here is our microscope showing the lectern (Figure 1).

**Figure 1**

We tend to think of the substance and an accident and, then, we tend to think of the one being related to the other (Figure 2).

**Figure 2**

10. The problem of predication is one of the classical problems which has been with us since time immemorial and which is still with us today. Kant doesn't resolve it, but at least he is aware that when you say that, for example, "S is P", it is only in a very carefully to be watched sense in which you can speak of the word 'is' as standing for a relation between a subject and a predicate. I think Kant's remark is a very intuitively insightful commentary on the syncategorematics.

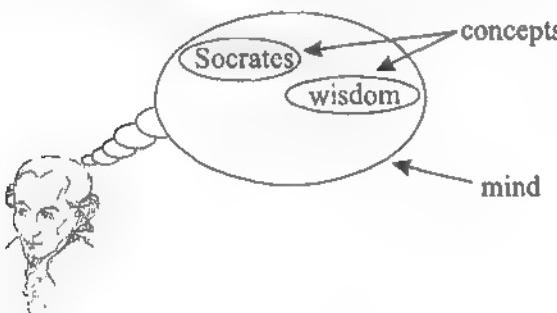
11. Notice he could generalize this, but he doesn't because his point is, in a way, that if you can get clear (this was a traditional view in logic) about singular subject-predicate statements, then the way is open for getting clear about "if...then...", "all," "some," and so on.

12. Why would Kant speak of "if...then..." as a relation? Well, again, this passage indicates that we should be very careful because, on the one hand, relations are empirical relations like spatiotemporal relations and, on the other hand, there are, in a very metaphorical sense, "relations." As Kant points out in connection with the categories, particularly substance and

attribute, we have to watch like a hawk our tendency to use the word ‘relation’. So, here (A187/B230) is another passage that is to be bugled. So, in the Table of Categories, you should put little “scare” quotes around the word ‘relation’ there and a reference to that section that I just read at the end of the *First Analogy*.

### C. Section 19 of the B deduction: judging vs. associating concepts

13. Let us go back to “the logical form of all judgments consisting in the reflective unity of the apperception of the concepts which they contain.”<sup>3</sup> So, we are aware now that the word “relation” has, as it were, a kind of *transcendental employment* when we are considering the epistemic powers of the understanding and it needs to be distinguished from the straightforward sense in which the “spatial” and the “temporal” are relations. What does Kant object to in traditional doctrines of judgment as involving a relation between two concepts?



**Figure 3**

14. Here is a mind and suppose it has the concept of Socrates and the concept of wisdom (Figure 3). We judge

Socrates is wise

and this is a mental act which, in some sense, brings *together* a deployment of these concepts, an actualization of them in the mental act—because

<sup>3</sup> Sellars is paraphrasing the title of §19 in a manner consistent with his interpretation “The Logical Form of all Judgments consists in the Objective Unity of the Apperception of the Concepts which they contain”. (B140)

concepts as such are really abilities to think something.<sup>4</sup>

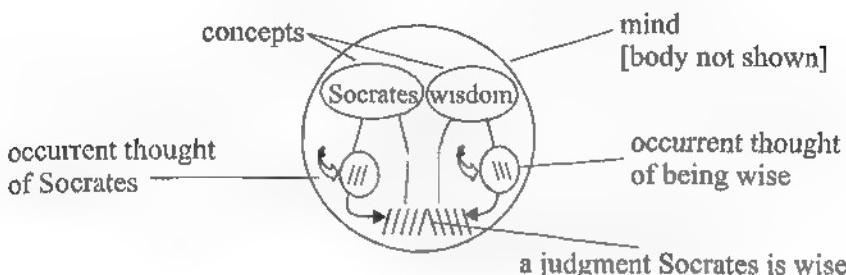


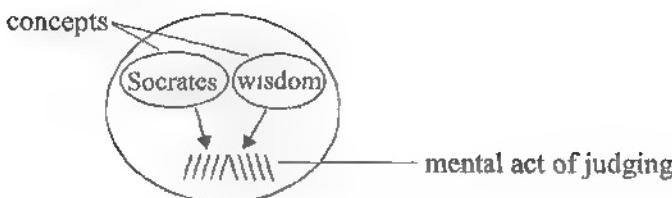
Figure 4

We have the concept of Socrates brought into play with the concept of wisdom (Figure 4). So, we have an occurred thought of Socrates and an occurred thought of being wise combined into a judgment.

15. Of course, there are all kinds of ways in which thoughts can get together cheek by jowl, but judgment is a very special "cheek-by-jowlyness" of thoughts. This is what Kant is concerned to point out.

16. Think of an empiricist philosopher of the kind that Kant is attacking, a philosopher with a "British Empiricist Humean" strand of thought. I think here he really has Hume in mind because he is emphasizing the scheme of association and of course Hume adopts this. Hume might say: we have the concept of Socrates and the concept of wisdom (Figure 4); when we judge that Socrates is wise, we have a mental act of judging which somehow involves the deployment of these concepts (Figure 5). We can distinguish in the "thought act" between that which is the deployment of one concept and that which is the deployment of the other (Figure 5).

<sup>4</sup> Sellars discusses the cluster of "conceptualist" problems emerging out of the act-content tradition. As far as Kant is concerned, the problem for conceptualism becomes: How do we justify synthetic a priori truth? Although it is not a problem with analytic truth, why can't there be a case that satisfies the antecedent of our synthetic a priori hypothetical but not the consequent? The problem concerns the *contents* of ideas and not the *acts*: two different meanings of connection develop—connection of content vs connection of mental acts. The former is implication, the latter is mere association of ideas as an externally generated companionship of thoughts (that develops from a disposition to have one kind of thought upon having another). The *external* connection between concepts is association of ideas. The *internal* connection is an "implication" between contents. Locke thought of the association of ideas as a contrast to a rationally acceptable connection between contents, but by the time of Hume, as the connections became thinner and thinner, all this has changed. A considerable amount of Hume, Sellars would say, involves claiming that what Locke mistakenly thinks is an internal connection between contents is really an external connection between mental acts (concepts) or abilities: the realizations of mental habits. The issue of internal/external connections, as Sellars shows, influences Kant's discussion of subjective and objective unity.



**Figure 5**

But, of course, this kind of case in which we have two concepts deployed is the kind of case Hume discusses under the notion of "association."

17. For example, we could associate "Socrates" with "wisdom". I might associate—well, I always tend to bring in examples—I used Nixon a lot and before that LBJ. Let's take Simmias' lyre: I think of Simmias and then I think of the lyre. This is a theme that goes all the way back. So, there might be what we could call an "external" togetherness of the concepts of "Socrates" and "wisdom" or "Simmias" and "lyre." I mean, they are just happenstances of my experiences that are brought together. I could associate anything with almost anything. I might associate the city of Washington with corruption.

18. Kant is attacking this: he says that if you simply talk of judgment as a togetherness of concepts, you fail to see the crucial difference between a judgment and the togetherness of concepts which is involved in association.

#### *D. Section 19 of the B deduction: subjective unity of apperception*

19. Remember that I mean the deployment of concepts in the sense of abilities. So, here is a thinking of Socrates and a thinking of wisdom and here is a thinking of Simmias and a thinking of his lyre (Figure 6). I have these two thoughts together and, of course, in a way,

*I am aware that I who thinks of Socrates am the same as I who thinks of Simmias.*

So that there is a *subjective unity of apperception*. I am conscious of "I who thinks of Socrates" and "I who thinks of wisdom," "I who thinks of Simmias" and "I who thinks of a Lyre," "I who thinks of Washington," and "I who thinks of corruption." We have this kind of *external* connection here (Figure 6). It still involves the unity of apperception, but it is a *subjective* unity of apperception.

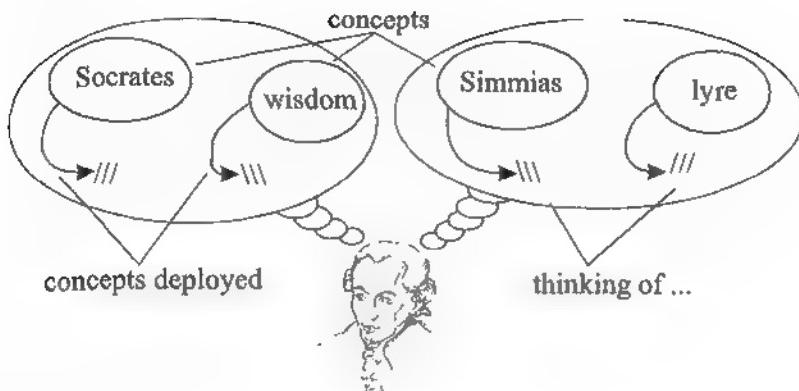


Figure 6

20. How does a judgment differ from this? Well, the crucial point is in this notion of the copula: the notion that, in judgment "Socrates" isn't merely being associated with "wisdom", he is being affirmed<sup>5</sup> to be wise. That is what Kant is concerned with in this passage. He is attacking a *vague* account which permits mere association to *usurp* the logical forms of judgment and he puts this now, in this case, by saying that you have the subjective unity of apperception.<sup>6</sup>

#### *E. Section 19 of the B deduction: objective unity of apperception*

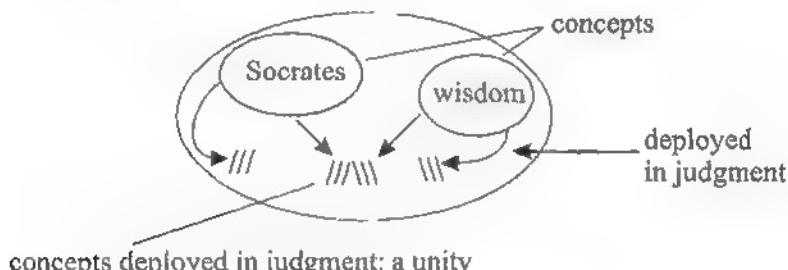
21. What does he mean by an "objective" unity of apperception? He

<sup>5</sup>Affirmation is quality of judgment.

<sup>6</sup>The rationalist, Sellars suggests, thinks of causal connection as being internal, holding between contents, but Hume argues it is an external connection that depends on experience. However, Hume agrees with Berkeley that geometrical demonstrations with respect to, say, triangles are possible if one stays within the content of one's idea. One comes to see that the interior angles equal 180°. It is not logically true but knowable by means of reflection upon a single content that can yield synthetic connections (unlike what is known by virtue of inference from one content to another). Knowledge that does not take us outside the scope of a single content can be a priori, this can be knowledge of necessary connections. Hume is not attacking the whole idea of necessary connection, he is concerned with purported cases of necessary connection between *two separate ideas* (contents), one of which is not contained in the other. Shape implies color because this can be determined by reflection upon single ideas, images. The connection is synthetic a priori. The mind can distinguish between two aspects of the same image (different uses of specific ideas), but no image of shape is not an image of color or vice versa. Lightning and thunder are not related as shape and color. One can have the idea of one that isn't an idea of the other. Later, we will see that Hume is not entitled to claim that we have the concept of necessary connection at all, not even in mathematics and logic. He simply accepts the view that necessity can be found among our ideas. Rejecting the theory of abstract ideas and making the content of sensation weaker and weaker merge to cause problems in accounting for necessity. Hume is paying the price of following Descartes in failing to distinguish between sensation and thought.

means one that claims objective validity. Obviously, lots of judgments are false. So, when he takes, as a character of judging, its being objectively valid, he doesn't mean that all judgments are true. That would be absurd. Any theory of knowledge that starts out with Protagoras by saying that judgments are true, that some are more useful than others, or something like that, then that is a theory upon which you close the book. It is just missing the point.

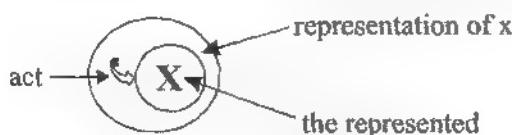
22. All right, so what we have is some kind of unity between the deployment of the concept of Socrates and the deployment of the concept of wisdom. There is a kind of unity here (Figure 7) which we are tempted to characterize in terms of the word 'relation'. And, you know, "we relate": the mind *relates* "wisdom" to "Socrates". But, of course, in association, in a way, the mind relates "wisdom" to "Socrates". Now the difference is that in the case of judgments, the relation goes along with a certain larger framework claim: the claim to be objectively valid. What does that mean?



**Figure 7**

### (α) Back to act-content and intersubjectivity

23. In order to understand this, we have to revisit the distinction between act and object and the ambiguity in the case of an idea or representation. Suppose we have the representation of  $x$  (Figure 8).



**Figure 8**

Well, you can look at that in terms of an act of representing  $x$  or you can look at it concentrating on what is represented. One of the points that we

have been making is that, *in the act-content model*, insofar as this is a representing of  $x$ , there is a sense in which  $x$  is not really distinct from the act of representing (Figure 9) though  $x$  may have independent reality; insofar as  $x$  is being represented, it is intimately connected with the act of representing it.

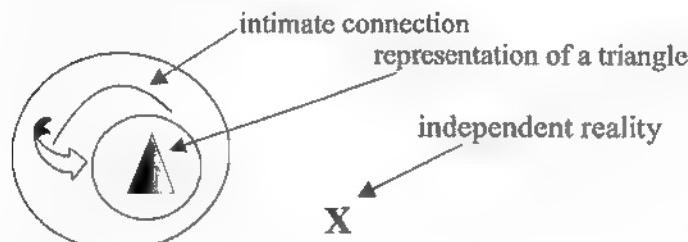


Figure 9

As I said, there are two models in the history of philosophy; they waltz through history together and the one that is most useful for our immediate purposes is the act-content model.

24. Now, suppose that I represent, say, Socrates (Figure 10).

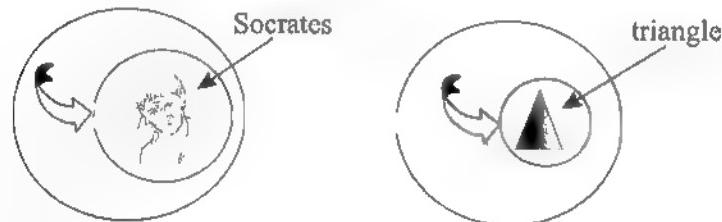
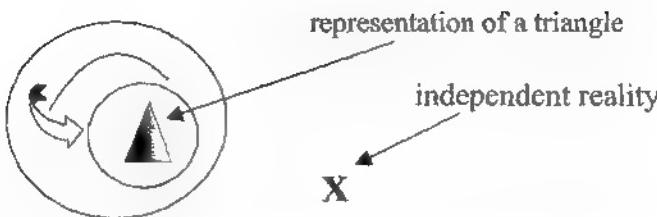


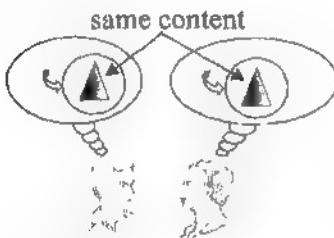
Figure 10

Wait, there is, in some sense, an example with Socrates—let's not take that example because that brings trouble to Kant. Let's take "triangle": that gives us the entree into the Kantian framework and it is safer (Figure 10). Suppose, then, that I have a representation of a triangle and, of course, for Kant, there is, in mind-independent reality, no such thing. A triangle, as I have been emphasizing, is in a representing of triangle, but there are none in independent reality as there would be for what Kant calls a "transcendental realist" with respect to space (Figure 11).



**Figure 11**

25. But now the fact remains, nevertheless, that two people can think of the triangle; they can have a thought of which the content is a triangle (Figure 12).



**Figure 12**

They can have two thoughts and—here is the crucial point—they can have two thoughts which have the *same* content. Now the word ‘same’ is still up for grabs; like the word ‘predication’, ‘sameness’ is still up for philosophical grabs or explication. The point is that it is taken for granted that there is an important sense in which two people can think of the same thing even if it doesn’t exist as an independent reality.

26. To take a common sense example: here are Jones and Smith, and they might be thinking of the same centaur or the same triangle. Their thought might have the same content. So, even if we don’t think of there being triangles in independent reality, just as there are no centaurs in independent reality, there nevertheless is, in some sense, a *domain of representables*, of *available* contents, you might say (Figure 13). So that even if there were no triangles existing in independent reality, there still is in some sense the representable triangle: a triangle that is intersubjective.

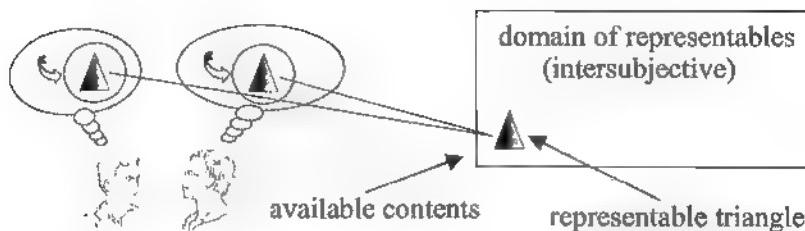


Figure 13

## (β) Objectivity and intersubjectivity; representables

27. Notice that the word ‘objective’ is one of these words, again, you can make beautiful music with. One basic contrast between the “objective” and “subjective” is that between independent reality and reality as I think of it; but another contrast is between what is private to me and what is public to all. When Kant is concerned with “objectivity,” you should very carefully gloss that by the word ‘intersubjectivity’: not just me, not idiosyncratic, but something which, as Peirce would say, doesn’t depend just on my thinking that it is so. Thus, there is a domain of representables, of available contents (Figure 13). If two people have thoughts of, let us say, a certain kind of isosceles triangle, or thoughts of a triangle generically, there is a sense in which there is something *objective* but not necessarily *real* in the sense of “actually existing.”

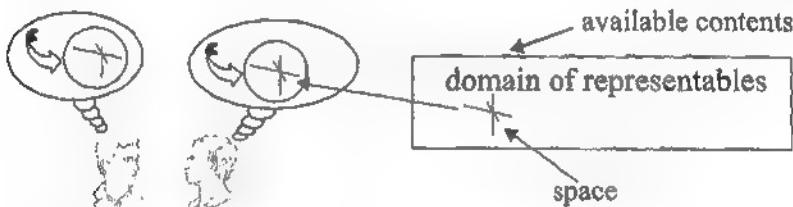
28. It is becoming fashionable, again, to draw a distinction which requires items which are, you know, of a Meinongian level and have a sort of subsistence which is public, but which still don’t have actual existence. So, one distinguishes between an item like the golden mountain, which is available for actual existence, and a humdrum copper mountain. The golden mountain is a *representable*: in realistic terms, there isn’t any actual, independent, real golden mountain, but there is the representable, the thinkable, the subsistent item. Additionally, there might be a copper mountain as an actual mountain. This is very important because, for Kant, the way the physical world exists is not real, independent existence—as transcendental realism holds—but it is still not private, or idiosyncratic. Consequently, there is this domain of representables.

## (γ) Representables and idealism

29. As you see, it is still *idealism* in the sense that the mode of being

that an item has as a representable nevertheless is—though not dependent upon really any *particular* act having it as its content—a mode of being that is still directed toward being a content. Take space or take any figure. For Kant, as I said, transcendental realism is false with respect to geometrical objects: in the classical sense, there are no such things; there are no such things as space and geometrical objects. But, nevertheless, space is not something private to me, you know; it is a common possession.<sup>7</sup>

30. Take space then. Among the representables, there is space, and Jones and Smith represent space (Figure 14). Their representings may involve other activities, but we are not concerned to go through the whole question of synthesis again. We might say that the cash value of a representable is its actually being the content of a representing, its primary mode of being would be for somebody actually to represent it.



**Figure 14**

God says, "the heck with the world" and he wipes out every mind so that, you see, nobody is actually representing space. But space can, in some sense, say, "You never touched me." Because space doesn't depend on my representing it and it doesn't depend on your representing it, but it is the sort of thing that gets its toehold on existence in the world through being represented. Fine.

31. Now let me emphasize this notion of a domain of representables because, as I said, ultimately for Kant, it is the physical world. Here (Figure 15) is the domain of "S-T representables", contents which are available for being the actual contents of representings.

<sup>7</sup>The world of experience cannot be the content of any person's actual representations or any set of them. Sellars provides a framework in terms of which we can see that the world of experience is the set of actual and obtainable representations which are constituted by a special sort of unity of which one can always represent more. Objects of experience will be related to judgment contents; actual experiences will be related to a subset of those.

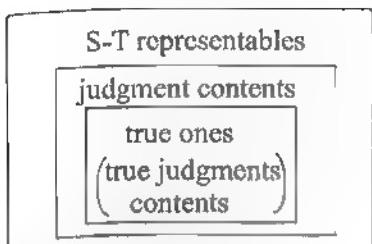


Figure 15

32. The traditional view was, "of course there are representables!" This is Leibniz's point; there are available representables. Leibniz brings in, as their source, theology, but Kant leaves it open. As a matter of fact, one of the most interesting problems in Kant's metaphysics is to determine the ultimate, exact status of the domain of possible experience or possible objects of experience. Since he does accept God as part of his metaphysics, I think that hovering around here is the idea that, in some way, this domain of representables is a function of God. He doesn't bring God directly into his theory of knowledge. He tries to explicate what is implicit, what is involved in knowledge, and if God is involved, well so much more interesting the concept of God becomes.

33. Here (Figure 15) is the domain of representables: spatial, temporal representables. And there is a domain of special representables which are the true ones.

#### (δ) Representables, truth, and objective validity

34. Now the classical theory of truth, as Kant points out, involves the abstract formula that a thought is true if it corresponds to its objects. Kant accepts that, but Kant would say, "what is the relation of "correspondence" between a thought and its object?" All right: there is a subset of representables which are the true ones (Figure 15). There is the representable "Socrates" and the representable "wisdom". When I judge that Socrates is wise, I am not merely associating Socrates with wisdom, I am committing myself to the idea that *independently* of me, these representables belong together.

35. As we would put it, there is a close logical tie between the judgment "snow is white" and the judgment "that snow is white is true". There is a very close connection between the two such that, in a way, if you think

that snow is white, you are committing yourself to the truth of snow being white. No matter how we go on to develop this into our semantical theory, you know this is a comfortable notion.

36. Kant appeals to that because when we say that something is true, we are bringing out the implications of this claim to objective validity, i.e., to a kind of status which is independent of my idiosyncracies, my associations, and so on.<sup>8</sup> It is true: independently of whether I like it or I wish it were so, or because I am afraid it is so, or because I am going to try to make it so. It is simply because it is so.

37. Reflect upon the connection between "snow is white" and "that snow is white is true" (or if you like, "'snow is white' in English is true"—this isn't the occasion to go into the specific problems of semantical theory, but to mobilize the intuition which Kant has here which we might try to formalize in a theory of truth). It is clear that Kant packed into this notion of truth some kind of notion of intersubjective binding. So, when I judge that Socrates is white, I mobilize the concept of Socrates and I mobilize the

<sup>8</sup> Sellars enjoyed seeing Hume through Kant and his lectures reflected it. According to Hume, to say that  $B_1$  necessitates  $B_2$ , we are expressing our inability to believe in a case of  $B_1$  that isn't a case of  $B_2$ . He concentrates on particular cases. As a result of experiences, Jones associates lightning and thunder. The key to Hume is realizing that this case involves an *external* connection between acts (subjective unity) in contrast to an internal connection between contents (color  $\rightarrow$  shape, an objective unity). So, whenever Jones thinks "lightning now," then he thinks it will thunder. To form this association is to acquire a general trait of character so that when one thinks (believes) lightning now, he thinks thunder soon. It involves beliefs of a specific kind. We must distinguish

whenever [Jones, at  $T_1$ , believes lightning, he believes, at  $T_1 + \Delta T$ , thunder]}

from

Jones believes [whenever lightning, thunder],

that is, lightning is always followed by thunder. The first merely says that when certain beliefs occur, another specific belief occurs. The second is universal. Thinking the general thought is not the same as being disposed to think "thunder shortly" when one thinks "lightning now." This confusion resurfaces as a problem with time. Does the experience of lightning cause a thought of the "thunder shortly" type? Or, after the experience, do we have a "thunder now" thought? Here is where Kant attacks Hume's fuzziness on the concept of time (a result of Hume's running together thoughts and images). How can we have an image of lightning's occurring yesterday? Expecting cannot merely be having a vivid image since it "points a temporal finger." It can be a memory but memory already involves the concept of the past. What Hume looks for is time as part of the content of a mental act, not the time of the mental act. Association concerns singular judgments about events at particular spaces and times. Hume shows us compulsion in particular cases but there is nothing available to him to get the universal; he does not explain how we come to have general beliefs. Hume has accounted for fixed sequences of belief, but not an account of a belief in a fixed sequence: a sequence of impressions is not an impression of a sequence. This confusion provides a wedge for Kant who argues for a difference between thought of a unity and a unity of thoughts. For example, in I.IV.JI of the *Treatise*, Hume runs together what it is to have an impression of, say, a red triangle and to be convinced that we are *now* having an image of a red triangle: it is the "momentum" from "I see a red triangle now" to "I remember a red triangle" that lets us believe in the existence of the red triangle.

concept of white, but I am mobilizing them in a way other than simple association.

38. Here the unity of apperception is involved:

I who thinks of Socrates am I who thinks of white.

It is an objective unity of apperception in the sense that the representable "Socrates" and the representable "white" belong together. They belong together not simply by virtue of the happenstances of my experience which might lead me to associate the one with the other; they belong together objectively, independent of my individuality. Again, we are still not committing ourselves to transcendental realism; for their belonging together is a matter of their belonging together as objects of possible experience, as representables.

39. So, according to Kant, there is a sub-domain of representables which, we will call, for the time being, true representables (Figure 15). These are true judgment contents, a privileged set of judgment contents. In addition, we have representables which are not judgment contents.

#### (e) Truth, actuality, and coherence

40. Again, we must get away from dealing with Kant from a realistic theory of truth. We leave it open and use "truth" as a kind of—what shall I say—a kind of dummy word here for the time being because Kant doesn't say much about truth in the *Critique*. That is because, in the categories of modality, he has the category of "actuality." If you will ponder a moment, it is quite clear that, instead of saying 'that snow is white is true', I could have said that snow is white is *actual* as opposed to merely possible. Thus, what functions in the *Critique of Pure Reason* as an account of truth is the notion of actuality. That is why we have to watch Kant's discussion of actuality like a hawk. And, obviously, Kant is going to develop a coherence account of the kind of claim that actuality makes on the mind.

41. To continue: there are judgment contents which are true ones and I put in brackets here the word 'cohere' (Figure 16). What do they "cohere" with? They have to cohere with each other and they also have to cohere with all our perceptions. Look at the *Principles*, in the section called the *Postulates of Empirical Thought*, and look at the word 'actual'. When you see the word 'actual' there, just put in your mind "truth."

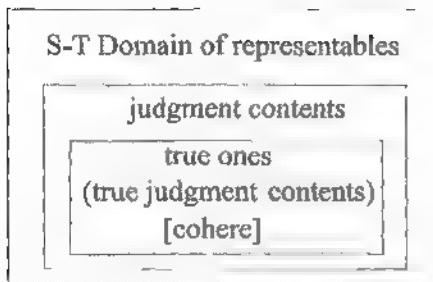


Figure 16

42. Of course, truth applies to philosophical statements; it applies to ethical statements; it applies to mathematical statements. When Kant is concerned with actuality, he is concerned with the "truth" of empirical statements. I have the word 'cohere' and I am glossing truth by the word 'actual'. The point in using the word 'actual' is to restrict his account to a theory of truth of empirical judgments, not to purely mathematical truth, or to ethical or philosophical truth.

43. Notice in §19, he says, in his definition of judgment,

...if I investigate more precisely the relation of the given modes of knowledge in any judgment, and distinguish it, as belonging to the understanding, from the relation according to laws of the reproductive imagination, which has only subjective validity... (B141)

(that is what I have been talking about)

I find that a judgment is nothing but the manner in which given modes of knowledge are brought to the objective unity of apperception. This is what is intended by the copula 'is'. It is employed to distinguish the *objective* unity of given representations from the subjective [emphasis, ws]. It indicates their relation to original apperception and its *necessary unity*. It holds good even if the judgment is itself empirical, and therefore contingent, as, for example, in the judgment, 'Bodies are heavy'. I do not here assert that these representations *necessarily* belong to *one another* in the empirical intuition, but that they belong to one another *in virtue of the necessary unity* of apperception in the synthesis of intuitions, that is, according to principles of the objective determination of all representations, in so far as knowledge can be acquired by means of these representations... (B141-2)

As I said, these principles concern the coherence of these representables.

(ζ) Truth, falsity, and knowledge; objective validity

44. Many of our judgments are false, even judgments of perception. What distinguishes the true ones from the false ones? Well, what distinguishes the true ones is that the representables which I actually represent in my judgment belong together independently of me, belong together in this system of possible experience as we can call it.

I do not here assert that these representations *necessarily* belong to one another in the empirical intuition, but that they belong to one another *in virtue of the necessary unity* of apperception in the synthesis of intuitions, that is, according to principles.... (B142)

In other words, the representables which are the chosen ones, so to speak, the true ones, the binding ones, don't concern independent reality in the sense of things in themselves; they concern a drawing together of items which are essentially representables, i.e., which get their toehold on reality by virtue of being actually represented. This is the idealism of Kant. All right: so he appeals to the *Principles* here.

45. Remember we were drawing a careful distinction between act and content. I have been emphasizing this notion that people can in some sense represent the same content and that means that in some sense there is a domain of contents. Let us say that there is a kind of Meinongian domain of contents, a domain of representables. These can be contents of my representations and your representations. Kant doesn't draw these distinctions nicely. Then, no philosopher did, particularly the philosophers who used the word 'idea'. If you study the word 'idea' in 17th century philosophy, you find sometimes it means an act of representing and sometimes it means the content of representing as that which is represented by a particular act. Sometimes the word 'idea' simply means a representable and the same is true for the word 'concept'.

46. All right.

Only in this way does there arise from this relation a *judgment*, that is, a relation which is *objectively valid*.... (B142)

Again, that would mean that all judgments are true if we took it just like that; it means

which claims to be objectively valid,

and in a sense, again, objective with respect to *me*. You see this is like Kant's use of the word 'Erkenntnis'. We use the word so that built into it is the idea of truth: knowledge is justified true belief. But Kant uses the word 'Erkenntnis' much as we would today tend to use the phrase 'knowledge claim', something that claims to be knowledge. Similarly, when he talks about objective validity here, he is concerned with what we are claiming when we make a judgment and how it differs from what is going on when we simply associate ideas.

47. So there is a subjective unity of apperception, but there is also an *objective* unity in that the representables that I put together in my judgment *objectively belong* together. They belong together not because, as I put it, they are embodied in the real world, but they belong together in the domain of representables.<sup>9</sup>

48. Think, if you will, in Leibnizian terms. After all, there are all these representables for Leibniz. They exist ultimately in the mind of God, but you can't take that as being self-explanatory. There are, of course, all kinds of possible worlds which we might call systems of states of affairs, of representable states of affairs, and then there is, for Leibniz, what we might call the chosen one. In a way we might map many things that Kant says onto that Leibnizian background. Thus, when he says

Only in this way does there arise from this relation a *judgment*, that is, a relation which is *objectively valid*... , (B142)

he doesn't mean, again, that all judgments are objectively valid, but they claim objective validity because they carry with them a kind of readiness. When we judge that snow is white, the representables "snow" and "white" belong together independently of hope, wish and so on. That is what Kant is talking about here. So we might say that they *claim* objective validity.

#### (η) Objective unity of apperception; intersubjectivity

49. I suggest that §19 is the key to the *Principles* and, in particular, it is the key to the *Second Analogy*. Let us bring together some points. If you

<sup>9</sup>The subjective unity of states of empirical consciousness (my acts of thought) taken as the descendent of the "external relation" between ideas must find its source elsewhere. The actual (true) order can only be determined by bringing in their relation to empirical objects.

are working within the act-content distinction, then you distinguish between the act and the content of that act and, in a certain sense, the content is related to the act. The act-content approach tends to emphasize the ontological dependence of the content on the act of thinking it, at least the content qua content without, of course, committing itself to the view that there is something. I mean, in some sense, a distinction between the act and the content doesn't involve that what we represent must have, ipso facto, as being represented, an independent status. So, if I represent space, then space exists as something I am representing. It is something which is the content of your act of representing if you represent it, but in some sense it is independent of whether I represent it or you represent it. Kant doesn't mean that it has independent reality, independent of representation altogether. He denies that space exists as something in itself having independent reality. So what is called for is the notion of an intersubjective domain of items which is independent of what I represent and what you represent without being a domain of things in themselves.

50. This intersubjective domain is, of course, what Kant ultimately appeals to in his theory of possible experience.

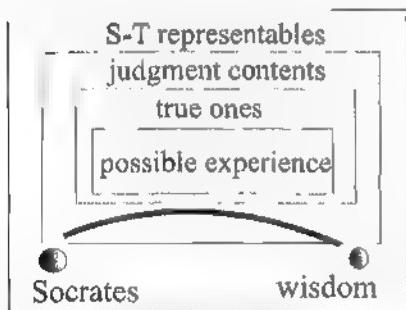


Figure 17

The representables that we are interested in are judgmental representables (Figure 17). I can judge Socrates is wise and you can judge Socrates is wise. What Kant wants to argue is that the difference between association and judgment is that when we judge, what we are representing involves a connection of the representables, Socrates and wisdom, which is independent of the happenstances of our own experience. But in association, which is dependent upon the happenstances of our own experience, there is no representable that belongs in this privileged set. Representables in this privileged set must, in order to be true, conform to certain principles of

coherence and this is the origin of the coherence theory of nature.

51. How does "apperception", the objective unity of apperception, come into this? We see how it comes in with the case of association, do we not? In that case, I actually associate them: I mean, I associate Socrates and wisdom. I never met the man, but someone has chatted with me and said, "you know, Socrates, he was a wise guy." So, I believe him and the next day, you know, up in my mind pops the idea of Socrates and then into my mind pops the idea of wisdom. The *unity of apperception* is involved in the sense that I am aware that I who is thinking of Socrates am I who is thinking of wisdom: it is the same "I" who thinks of Socrates and who in this case is thinking of wisdom. There is a subjective unity of apperception here merely by virtue of associating Socrates with wisdom. I am not making any claim to truth.

52. Kant wants to emphasize that judgment is a unity of ideas that involves a subjective unity of apperception, just as associations do. But the idea that Kant is stressing is that when I judge, I am committing myself to the idea that the representable Socrates and the representable wisdom belong together regardless of the happenstances of my experience. They simply belong together. Now the realist, of course, would say that they belong together by virtue of the real *Ding an sich* world containing Socrates being wise. However, what Kant wants to say is that these representables belong together not by virtue of their being a Socrates in the world of things in themselves and wisdom being a feature of things in themselves—although that is why the Socrates example is bad because, obviously, Socrates is a person and very special problems come in here. That is why we should take an example like "the earth is round" as opposed to "the earth is flat". So we have the concept of the earth and the concept of being round, or spherical, and those two representables belong together.<sup>10</sup>

53. Thus the objective unity of apperception (when I judge) would be that anybody who is going to represent the earth and spherical should represent them in the judgment "the earth is spherical" as opposed to "the earth is not spherical" or "the earth is cubical" or so on. So, the claim is that when I make a judgment, I am committing myself to the kind of unity which occurs here: one which *should* occur in the minds of anybody who thinks of Socrates and of wisdom or of the earth and of being spherical. That is the connection.

<sup>10</sup>The objective unity of apperception is, as Sellars says below, the intersubjectively actual order of representations (apprehensions) brought about by the ordered relationships in which objects and perceiver stand.

54. The objective unity would be the intersubjective unity, but Kant doesn't say that because he is still writing in the Robinson Crusoe tradition of the theory of knowledge. However, in the *Prolegomena*, he does emphasize intersubjectivity. It still plays a relatively subordinate role but Kant packs it into some of the statements he makes about the kinds of coherence and the kinds of claim that the representables have on the acts of representing which occur in minds. Let's use the example of the earth and being spherical. There is the representable, "earth", and the representable, "spherical", and I might simply associate the earth with spherical as I might associate Sirmias with the lyre (Figure 18).

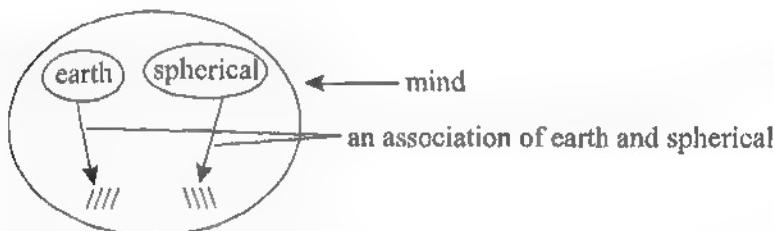


Figure 18

But if judge that the earth is spherical, then these two representables belong together as a judgeable, as a judgeable which has a claim upon any judger. So that the unity of apperception in judging is one which has not only subjective status as association does, but also has intersubjective status.

55. I would like to emphasize, again, that this domain of representables is intersubjective. It is not objective in the thing-in-itself-ish kind of way, but it is intersubjective so that there is an intersubjective domain of representables, a common world of representables. When he explicates the notion of the status of the physical world, he emphasizes that there are certain available contents of judgment which belong together regardless of what any particular person thinks. This is quite other than association because obviously what we associate is a function of the contingencies of our past experience.

56. Notice that the categorical form of judgment should not be taken to be the one that Kant thinks of as primary although, as I said, one of the classical themes of that time was "save the simple and you save all." The idea is that, if you can understand a simple subject-predicate judgment, the rest are built up from there by negation, "if...then...", "all," and "some," and so on. Thus for a hypothetical judgment, the constituent judgments involve the copula. Like most philosophers, Kant thinks that if you can explicate

the truth of singular matter-of-factual judgments, then you can take care of all the others. Kant takes it for granted that all singular judgments fall into subject-predicate form. Kant's point is that if you can explain what is actually going on when a person is judging, as opposed to merely associating, "Tom" with "tallness", then, in principle, you can explain the other cases. I think he was right about that, but an awful lot needs to be said about it that wasn't even in the air at the time. Certainly there was nothing in Kant like the 19th century idealist line that all judgments are subject-predicate form: like the Bradley-Bosanquet line that all judgments have the form "Reality is —.".

## Chapter 13: Time and the Experience of Change

### *A. Hume; the experience of a hand going up; retention*

1. Today I will try to fill a gap that has been building up in the discussion by coming to grips with the problem of time. Time is, according to Kant, a form of sense, a form of intuition; and then there is knowledge, the act of which is presumably in time. There is a certain classical group of puzzles about time which I am sure you are all familiar with in one way or another. They come to focus in the concept of the specious present. The point is that there is a certain sense in which the present moment is bordered by the past. We will explore today the problem to which this concept of the specious present gives a solution.

2. One of the ways for focusing on the problem is to look at Hume. You know there are a lot of philosophers to look at; sometimes it is salutary to look at Hume. Clearly, one of the inadequacies in Hume's philosophy is his account of the temporal character of experience. He can be patched up here and patched up there—that is the fascinating thing: you can always patch up one part of Hume and get an exciting point of view and patch up another part and get an exciting point of view, but when you try to put them altogether and get one coherent picture, you really cannot. So in that sense, in the case of Hume, the parts are greater than the whole.

3. As you know, Hume compares the self to a stage in which actors come and go—only there is no stage. I am not going to break that down; I am going to be vague here. Putting it roughly, all we have is a bundle of perceptions for Hume, but they have some kind of togetherness. They have a contextual togetherness. They form a nice tidy string.

4. The example that I always give is the example of the experience of a hand going up. Let us see how we want to conceptualize it. O.k., we are experiencing a hand going up. We have an impression of a hand down within, of course, a bundle of other impressions of background movement, a table, and so on; but I am just going to single it out. We have an impressions of a hand down here; impression of a hand midway; impression of a hand up there (Figure 1).

We have an impression of a hand down here at time  $T_i$ :



An impression of a hand midway,  $T_j$ :



An impression of a hand up here,  $T_k$ :



**Figure 1**

5. O.k., but at any point in time, we don't have an experience of a hand going up (Figure 2).

At this point, time  $T_i$ ,  
there is no experience  
of a hand going up,



At  $T_j$  there is no  
experience of  
a hand going up,



At  $T_k$  there is no  
experience of a  
hand going up.



**Figure 2**

You might just compare this to a series of snapshots (Figure 3).

Snap! Hand here:



Snap! Hand here:



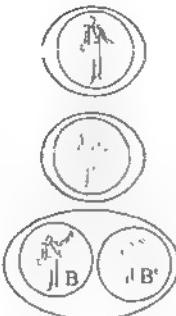
Snap! Hand here:



**Figure 3**

6. Well, the first thing we might want to do is to introduce something like the notion of *retention*. Somehow this "handshaped" experience is retained. And so, you have, then, let us call this 'A' (Figure 4).

The experience, A,  
of the hand here:



The associated  
retention, A', of  
A.

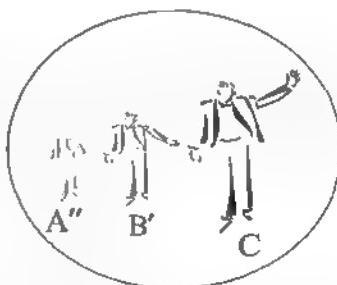
B and the associated  
retention of B, B':

**Figure 4**

Here is A' which you could associate with the retention of A. Then, you have B, which you retain; we have retention of B, which is B' (Figure 4).

7. Hume speaks in terms of vividness here: as time goes on, A becomes less vivid. A is still retained only it is a little fainter. At the experience of C, you have C, A'' and B' (Figure 5).

A is retained (as A'') only fainter  
than B' and the experience of C:



**Figure 5**

8. Now if this were all that was occurring, then we still would not have the experience of a hand going up. Obviously, we have the experience of the hand in one position (Figure 6).

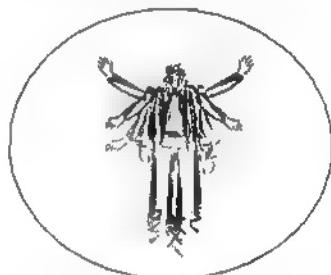
The experience of the hand in one position.



**Figure 6**

Then we have a kind of curious experience here (Figure 7).

A curious complex experience :



**Figure 7**

We have to compare it to those statues which have, say, fourteen or fifteen arms on each side representing motion.<sup>1</sup> Representing motion? Yeah, but not in the way which is appropriate to an account of motion. It is as though you have mere experiences of a hand shape at different places that went from vivid to less vivid to faint (Figure 8).

<sup>1</sup> Compare *SM*, Appendix, §13.

That is to say, we have a vivid experience here:



A slightly less vivid experience of a hand here:



And a faint experience of a hand here:



**Figure 8**

9. Now this is what posed the problem and, as I said, Hume was really unable to account for it. He really didn't have any account to give. Now Kant is keenly aware of the problem and his doctrine of inner sense is designed to give an answer. Whether it does is the interesting question.

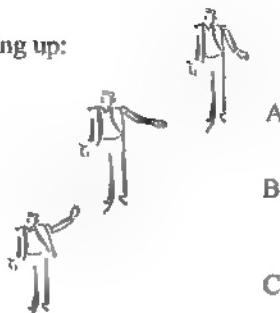
#### *B. A Cartesian approach*

10. Let us look at it in some different terms. Suppose that we are Cartesians. I need to depict a sequence of mind-body states: states of the mind and states of the body through time. For Descartes, well, you might say that time is an *ens rationis* but an objectively founded *ens rationis* because, in the Aristotelian tradition, time is the measure of change, and change for Descartes is real. So, here is a hand going up; it occurs in different positions. So we have, in this case, a realistic interpretation: there are real states, A, B, C (Figure 9).

Here we have a hand going up:

And here:

And here:



**Figure 9**

11. Now, the eyes—looking, as it were, out there—look at the hand pointed down, in the middle, and raised up. There is an action of the hand on the eye and on the brain causing what Descartes calls a “material idea”. The material ideas are brain states, states of the pineal gland, if you will, which are brought about by the hand being first down, then midway, then up: the light, the eye, the pineal gland, the material ideas, the state of the pineal gland (Figure 10).

A pineal state corresponding to a hand being down:



A pineal state of a hand being midway:



And a pineal state of a hand being raised:



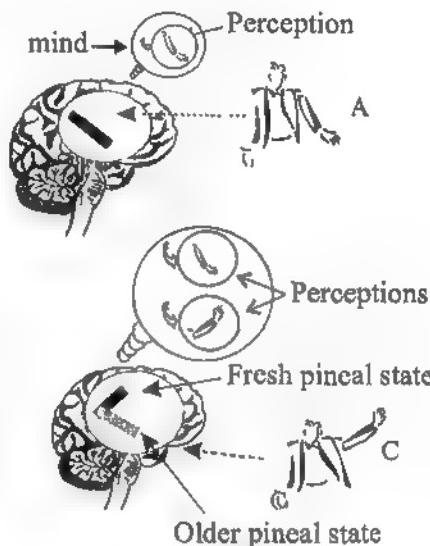
**Figure 10**

I will concentrate on the pineal gland and just draw the hand here; there would be a certain state of the pineal gland which would correspond to the hand being, or, at least, seeming to be down, and so on. Here is the pineal gland counterpart. And of course, we have the pineal gland counterpart of

the hand being at each location (Figure 10).

12. We have the physical state and, in addition, presumably, another state, the sense impression corresponding to the pineal gland. This is something which I shall call the perception of the hand "having certain orientation," just as it does for Hume (Figure 11).

Here is a, a perception, corresponding to a pineal state:



A later perception with a corresponding pineal state and a less fresh pineal state with a corresponding perception:

**Figure 11**

Here would be the perception of a hand shape; and here would be the perception of a hand shape there, corresponding to this state of the pineal gland. We have a 1-1 correspondence between what we call the "material idea" and the sensuous experience, or perceptions, in the mind.

13. Now, at this stage, the Cartesian account is only metaphysically different, if you will, from that of Hume. Descartes speaks of a pineal gland state corresponding to the perception: the first perception to the first pineal gland state and later there would be one corresponding to the later pineal state. The first pineal gland state would be a slightly less fresh one. Later we would have a still more favored state of the pineal gland corresponding to a perception along with a slightly older state of the pineal gland (Figure 11). We have simply an account of several perceptions, one of which we might characterize as persisting. Here again, we have *not* accounted for that experience of a hand going up.

### C. Physiology and retention; sense impressions and the $\tau$ -dimension

14. We might say, "yes, there must be something more than this: it isn't simply that the states of the pineal gland are, as it were, reverberating, or continued, although weakened and dampened and so on." What we need is some way to account for the fact that when the pineal gland is in this state, we have an experience which is a unique experience of a motion. One way that this could have been done was simply to postulate it: to postulate that, at the "later" stage, it is not just that there are two or three states, with one impression slightly older and a still older one. It is as though there were a dimension in the pineal gland, a linear dimension which is a purely physical dimension of the brain but which is distinguished from *mere* retention. It is the kind of ordered retention which is manifested in the experience of change. So, then, it is incorrect to draw the state of the pineal gland like this (Figure 12).

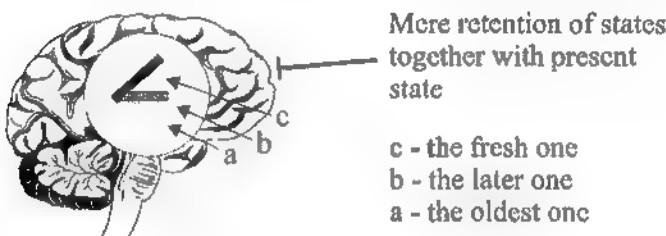


Figure 12

15. The correct way to draw it is here (Figure 13).

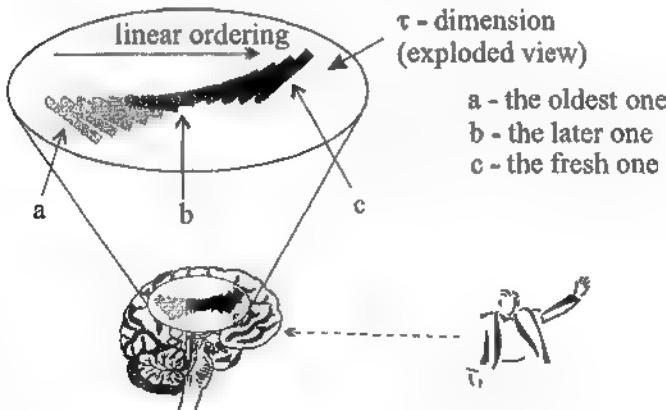
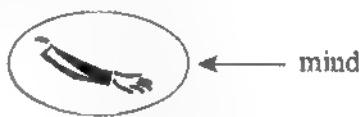


Figure 13

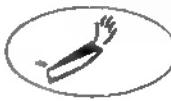
As the stimuli pour in, it's not just that they are retained. The older ones, as it were, move to the left. This is highly metaphorical. All I am indicating is that we have here a sort of linear dimension of physiology which is a basic feature of the human sensory system and which provides that the older stage is over on the left, the later one midway, the fresh one right. Let's call this *postulated* linear ordering of "retentions" a  $\tau$ -dimension.

16. Kant was, as all his contemporaries were, very much caught up in physiology. Physiology was as much on the order of the day then as it is now and as "promissory note-ish" then as it is now. Kant was convinced, you see, that there was something neurophysiological in the brain, some feature of brain activity which corresponds to the conscious experience of change. So if we carried on talking in physiological terms, we would say that what we have here (Figure 14) is an incorrect picture of the situation because the conscious experience is the counterpart, not just of a simple togetherness of the different pineal gland states, but of a kind of ordered (linear) array of them in this direction (Figure 15).

a sense impression  
of a hand here:

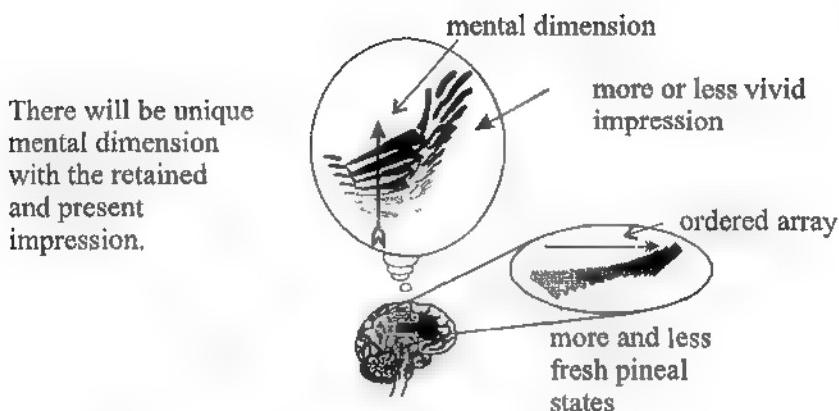


Following, we have  
a sense impression of  
a hand raised here:



**Figure 14**

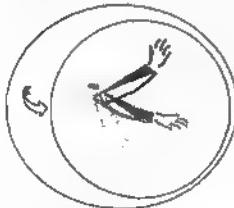
17. If a Cartesian were attempting to come to grips with that, he would say that what we have here is, first of all, a sense impression of a hand down, followed by impressions at various stages (Figure 14). And then we have all the impressions, in some unique way, in the mind. The preceding sense impression isn't simply located merely spatially; there is a different way in which what is retained in the ordering relation exists in the mind. Pictorially, we might again, put it this way, where the earlier stage remains (Figure 15).



**Figure 15**

#### D. The $\tau$ -dimension as a temporal order

18. This mental dimension is not spatial of course. What we have is a reflection of the ordering of the pineal gland which is shown below right (Figure 15). Of course, corresponding to its later stages, the state is more vivid; there is a unique mental dimension in which the retained impression is together with the present impression without being merely experienced as spatially connected with it. Here would be the freshest impression which I'll put at the top (Figure 15). And here would be the series and so on. So, there is a *temporal* ordering here. It isn't simply as it is in our picture of Hume, a composite image of hand shapes, all coming from one point (Figure 16).



**Figure 16**

19. The *postulated* way in which this retention is ordered is so that right in the present moment, although these items are in some way simul-

taneous, they are ordered in a way which is appropriate to an experience of change. You see, that is what we wanted in the case of Hume. Retaining the impressions, i.e., the ideas which are retained, cannot be simply represented like this (Figure 16).

20. The trouble for Cartesians and Humeans is that they cannot really take this step of postulation. Why? Because, according to the Cartesian, if something goes on in your mind, *you know it*. So that, if there this unique kind of ordering here, you would be directly aware of it. And, *ex hypothesi*, these states are all simultaneous. So even if one speaks about a mysterious  $\tau$ -dimension here, it is not going to help Descartes. For him, if something goes on in your mind, you are aware of it. So, since these items belong to the  $\tau$ -dimension but are also simultaneous, we would be aware of these items as temporally ordered in a unique kind of way, but also *as simultaneous* and that is what destroys the Cartesians ability to account for this.

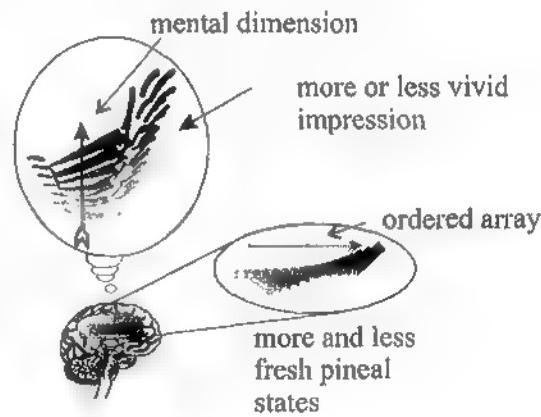
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## Chapter 14: Kant on the Experience of Change

### A. Successiveness and the $\tau$ -dimension; the experience of sense impressions as temporal

1. Now the crucial fact to bear in mind in all this is that Kant is not a Cartesian with respect to self-knowledge. You might say that Kant is pretty close to being Cartesian with respect to conceptual activities of the mind—reasonings and so on. But when it comes to the sensory aspect of the mind, he takes much more what we would call today a “postulationalist” account, or a hypothetical-deductive mode of explanation, or inference to the best explanation, or whatever you want to call it. Kant is perfectly well prepared to bring in a theory as to what is going on in our minds. As a result, he can make all these moves we have made and he can make one *more* move. He can say that when we are in this state (Figure 1, which is Figure 15 of chapter 13), what we become aware of is a *temporal ordering*.

There will be unique mental dimension with the retained and present impression.



**Figure 1**

2. For Kant, you have to distinguish between the sheer sensuous aspect of experience and what he calls *intuition*. I have been emphasizing Kant's views on the distinction between sensation and intuition. Now, the move that Kant needs to make here is to distinguish carefully between *inner*

*sense and inner intuition.*<sup>1</sup> I mean, he doesn't press this, but it does enable him to make the following moves.

3. Look at the situation as it might seem to Kant. We have the following stages in the evolution of the sensuous side of the self. Here is the sensuous side of the self (Figure 2).<sup>2</sup>



Figure 2

I am not working here with the problem of the temporal structuring of, let us say, philosophical thoughts or moral reasoning or so on. Kant develops his theory of time most graphically, most carefully, in the context of perception.

4. Here is the situation then. Remember you are not to think of the Kantian world as frozen, unchanging; the world is not temporal, but it still has a manner of successiveness. In a way, this fits perfectly into the classical scheme of time as such, as an *ens rationis* to be distinguished from change. So, we might say that classical philosophers would have distinguished temporalized change which involves the location of changes in this measurement system which is time from change as such, as it really is, which is not temporal. I emphasize again how congenial Kant's distinction between successiveness and temporal successiveness is to the classical tradition.

5. What Kant can say is that, in the order of successiveness of sense, there is, first of all, an impression appropriate to a hand in the first position down here, then there is a sense impression which *appears in experience*,

<sup>1</sup> Sellars' discussion of inner sense focuses on the idea that the self's passivity (affection) to itself demands an *an sich* action (in the  $\tau$ -dimension) of the self in itself (to be introduced in Figure 4) which action is, likewise, brought about by the in itself. The representings brought about by the self in itself under the guidance of the in itself constitutes reality as it appears to us. The picture that Sellars will draw starts with a series of impressions being retained (in the  $\tau$ - and  $\sigma$ -dimensions) in an order-preserving occurrence. This manifold of impressions when taken up (in the synopsis) has, then, an order based on the ordering of the elements of the manifold. The ordering of the elements is not the represented temporal order of appearance but, nonetheless, influences the synthetic activity of the productive imagination. The manifold of the sensuous side of the real self is part of the dynamical in itself. Although it is an ordered array of the sensuous side, the succession and duration of the manifold are not in time. Inner sense has dropped out of favor. Sellars suggests that its disappearance is linked to a tacit acceptance of part of the myth of the given.

<sup>2</sup> "The sensuous side of the self," reappears throughout the discussion and I have tried to indicate when it plays a role. Sellars often put it in the diagram only to ignore it. In Sellars' Kant, sense impression (taken as non-conceptual items) do not play a central role in the diagrams.

you might say, as "hand here", and then "hand up there." Only the difference is that Kant takes this notion of a linear ordering, a one-dimensional ordering in such a way that all this occurs in some sense in that ordering. They have a certain  $\tau$ -ordering (Figure 3).

A sense impression  
of a hand down, then  
a sense impression of  
a hand raised occurring  
in a  $\tau$ -order.

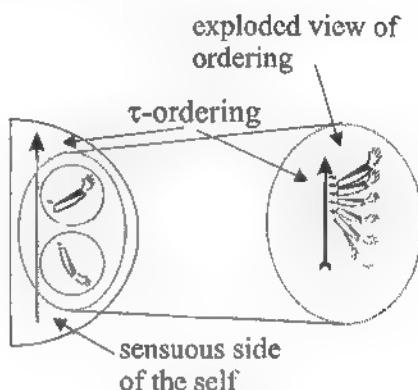


Figure 3

6. In a certain sense these are simultaneous, but they are not temporally simultaneous because they are not in time yet. Time is, as Kant puts it, an *ens rationis*. Now then, we distinguish between sense and intuition; time is a form of inner intuition. Then we can say that here is a representation of time: a representation of time as a sequence of periods (Figure 4).<sup>3</sup>

#### B. Intuitively representing sequences; anti-Cartesianism

7. I am going to be discussing the structure of time in a moment; I just want to evoke in your memory the discussion of time at the end of the *Aesthetic*. The *Aesthetic* doesn't always draw distinctions which are essential to the Kantian system, but Kant himself knew that and warns us

<sup>3</sup>The outermost "representation" on the left of Figure 4 is the representing of the (transcendental) self in itself. In Figure 4, the successive representings making up the unity of the empirical self (that is, experience) require a temporal ordering of the states of the empirical self. Although we know ourselves as appearance, our empirical consciousness is brought about by a synthesis of the manifold arising out of the passivity to ourselves. The acts of the self in itself affect the self's passivity. From the transcendental point of view, we know ourselves as empirical representers as a result of the occurrence of the sequence of represented representings ordered in time. The causation involved is noumenal, but not the same as the "*affizieren*" that generates the  $\Theta$ - and  $\tau$ -dimensions (see / (81), note 17)

about that.<sup>4</sup> The trouble is that Kant never went back and re-did everything that should have been re-done to bring the *Aesthetic* into keeping with the requirements of the theory of experience as he develops it in the *Analytic*. 8. Here (Figure 4), then, is a representation of time at the level of intuition: *the level of the direct representation of singulars*. Time is the form of that.

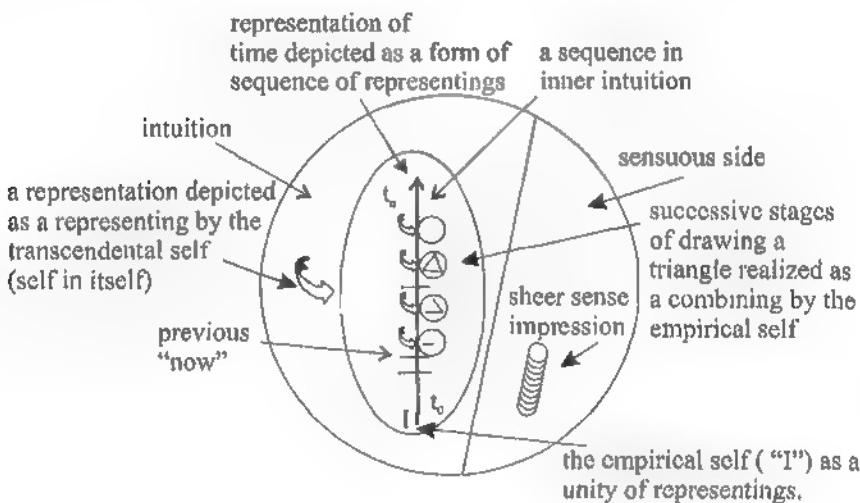


Figure 4

Again, without bringing in more into my diagram than I need, the point is that at this stage we distinguish between sheer sense impressions and what we become aware of in experience. And what we become aware of in experience has the form of time, as well as space.<sup>5</sup> I am abstracting from space here. The point is that there is the *now*. Time has a “*now*”. Then, at this time, I am having an impression of a hand in one position (Figure 5). In this situation, I have the experience of a hand in the various positions—

<sup>4</sup> For example, A379. As Sellars often remarks, time is the form of intuitively represented representings (*SM*, ch II, ¶14). As depicted here, they are states of the empirical self as it evolves (“draws”) an intuition of a triangle (a represented nonrepresenting). However, Sellars points out that Kant’s *Aesthetic* makes it look as though that is the only kind of *successiveness* there is (see *SM*, ch II, ¶16 and *Appendix*, ¶17) and this coheres “with the ‘subjectivistic’ (phenomenalistic in the Berkeleyan sense) aspects of Kant’s thought” that Kant doesn’t take the trouble to clarify until the second edition *Refutation of Idealism*. Figure 4, then, is compatible with Kant’s *Aesthetic* in its depiction of intuition (leaving out the sensuous side that belongs, properly speaking, to the second edition *Analytic*)

<sup>5</sup> As it appears here, space is depicted as a represented in the representations of the empirical self –this gets clarified later.

each with its "new" now. The hand is *now* in this position and here we have the experience, the *intuitive* experience, of hand in this position: *then* the hand in that position and *now* the hand in this position.

Leaving aside all other parts of the previous diagrams.

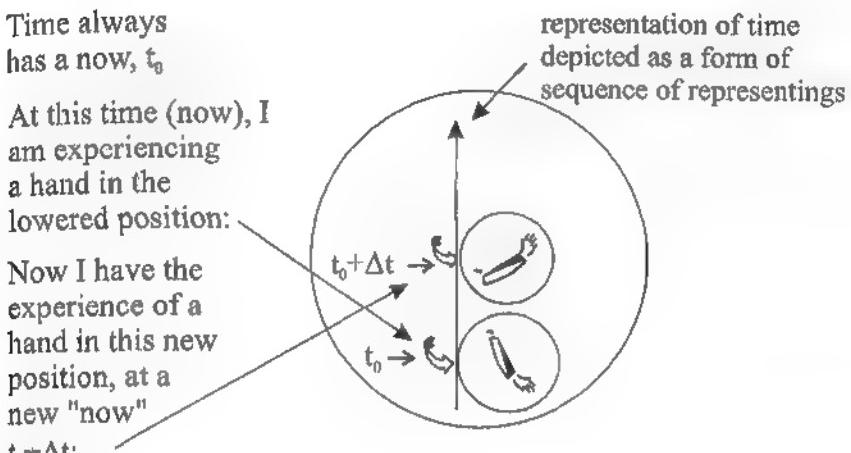


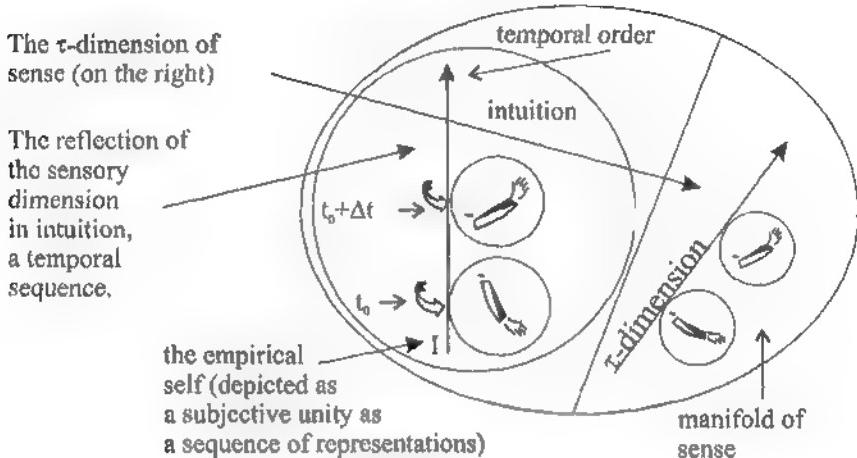
Figure 5

9. So from this point of view, the linear ordering, which retention involves, gets transposed, as it were, into an intuitive representation of a sequence and in that case, we have the intuitive experience of a hand moving and being raised. Kant, you see, can make use of the  $\tau$ -dimension which we can call the "form of sense" because he doesn't have to hold that if something is in the manifold of sense, we are aware of it as such.<sup>6</sup> Kant is, in that sense, not a foundationalist. The Cartesian foundationalist thinks that what we know directly and primarily are certain sensory states of ourselves.

10. So that what I want you to notice is that there is the  $\tau$ -dimension, the  $\tau$ -dimension of sense, and here is the *reflection* of it, you see, in what we experience (Figure 6). What we *experience* is a *temporal* sequence and the ordering of the experience as far as our impressions are concerned. I am not concerned about knowledge of objects; I am not discussing yet how objects as opposed to our sense impressions get into this. I am concerned about Kant's theory about how we become aware of our experience, our

<sup>6</sup>The "form of sense" would be the form of "outer sense" as described in SM, ch. 1, ¶73-75 where Sellars carves, as we shall see, Kant's intuition fourfold.

sense experiences as temporally ordered.



**Figure 6**

11. Notice, to speak metaphorically, what is to be experienced as earlier, later, and so on is the reflection of what is here in the  $\tau$ -dimension. So, the  $\tau$ -dimension of sense is reflected in the object of experience insofar as experience concerns the successive sensuous states of the self. So, here, at the level of intuition—of, let us say, inner intuition of sensory states—we see that reflection.

12. What this Kantian move does is it gives justice to the idea that somehow we only get at the past through the present. You see, suppose you asked Hume, "why don't we just say that we directly get back at the earlier experience?" He would not have regarded that as an open option: there is no direct apprehension of the past. Descartes would have said the same thing: there is no direct apprehension of the past. Now Descartes doesn't discuss this kind of problem, but Kant finds it to be a central theme in any adequate theory of experience.

13. So, what I have done here is to build up the idea of this  $\tau$ -dimension and say that where Kant is talking about time as a form of inner sense, strictly speaking, he is really not talking about time as an intuition. He is talking about time as a kind of ordering of sensory states such that they become *experienced as* temporally ordered. The sensory states in the  $\tau$ -dimension can be ontologically simultaneous; but they generate an experience of a sequence. Now they only generate that experience of a sequence because of many other factors that are involved; so, this is, for

Kant, a necessary condition for being an experience of a sequence but not a sufficient condition. A sufficient condition requires, needless to say, the whole apparatus of the categories and forms of thought.

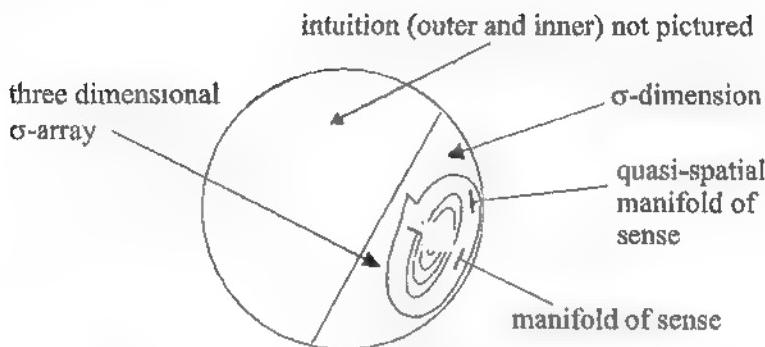
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6. We do intuit space and, of course, space exists in the mind not as a form of the mind and not even as a form of the state of the mind. But it exists as a represented; it exists as content. So we now represent the lectern in space. According to Kant, there must be something, in the sensory state that I am in, that is tied up with the fact that I experience something as rectangular rather than circular, as tall rather than short, as having this shape rather than that.

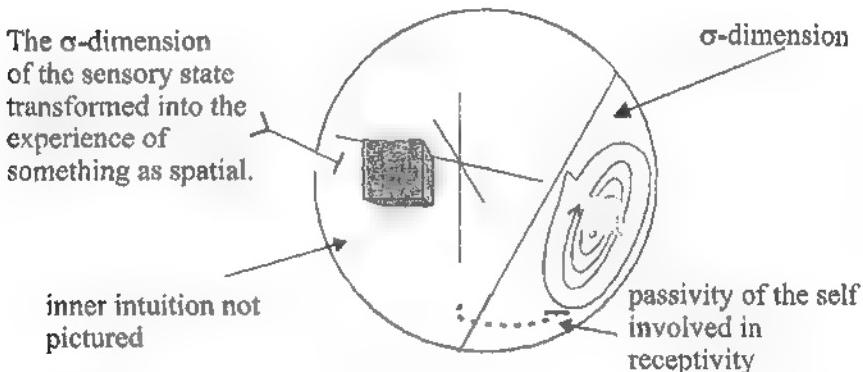
7. As I said, a mental state, for philosophers in this tradition, cannot as such be literally spatial. Therefore, we have to speak of some kind of analogy. Analogy has been primarily used in the context of theology; you couldn't walk a step in the field of theology without hearing "analogy". Analogy is a kind of metaphor. There are some cases which are straightforward and then you stretch it, and stretch it, until it becomes a way of representing a situation without really pinning yourself down to something which you have actual cash for.

8. There must be something about the structure of sensory states which, let us say, exhibits the characteristics of a pure geometry. Why should a pure geometry as we understand it today find only an interpretation in spatial items? Why couldn't it find other interpretations so that we could say that sense impressions conform, in their own way, to geometrical principles, very abstractly formed geometrical principles? They are not really spatial in a way which would be upsetting to someone who had this deep conviction that the mental as such cannot have spatial characteristics. We can work with that because we have the notion of an abstractly interpreted geometrical system which can have various realizations of the structures thus specified.

9. It is helpful and useful to think of Kant in these terms, but Kant himself never says it. It is clear, however, that he thinks that the manifold of sense *somewhat* is appropriate to my experiencing these shapes in space rather than those shapes in space. "Somehow"—as I said, we might be able to give an account of the "somehow", but Kant thinks, in any case, some "somehow" has to be there. I will call this, then, quasi-spatial, *somewhat spatial*. The manifold of outer sense has a structure which is "somehow" spatial; it is quasi-spatial; it is somehow analogous to space. It has a structure which is appropriate to appear in conscious experience as an intuited spatial structure in space (Figure 2).

**Figure 2**

10. Now you see, I would speak here of a  $\sigma$ -dimension, a three-dimensional array. A complete parallelism exists between Kant's theory of outer sense and his theory of inner sense.<sup>5</sup> The  $\sigma$ -dimension which is a three-dimensional array of sensory states gets, as it were, transformed as the experience of the spatial array (Figure 3).

**Figure 3**

11. I think it is useful again to remember that the classical theory of time is that time is an *ens rationis*. It is only something constructed by mind. Now we can make good sense of this. Kant thinks of space and time on par with respect to their ontological status. You know, there are passages in the *Critique* where Kant speaks of space as an idea of reason

<sup>5</sup>For some helpful caveats to this claim, see *SM*, ch I, ¶77-78.

which is almost exactly the same as space as an *ens rationis*.<sup>6</sup> I wanted to indicate that there is a genuine problem here: namely, how to account for the directly temporal aspect of our experience, the immediately temporal aspect of it in terms of successive sensory states which are, as it were, simultaneous with each other.

12. As I said, Kant has freer scope to work with because he does not require that every mental state somehow reports itself as it is: it can have a character which isn't reported, which gets into experience, as it were, in a different guise. Whereas as I said, the Cartesian view is that mental states report themselves. You may not be interested in them; you may not bother with them. But if you raise the question, "What am I experiencing?", "What is that?", bang! the answer comes right out at you. And it is truthful. Are there any questions before I leave this account of outer sense and inner sense?

13. You will find the account of the  $\tau$ -dimension in the appendix to *Science and Metaphysics* and you will find the account of space as a form of sense, as opposed to space as a form of intuition, in the first chapter; so, I am giving you an exposition of these which I placed in a larger context in *Science and Metaphysics*.

14. Consider the figure again: here is outer sense; here is the structure which gets into experience as the intuition of a cube; here is an intuition of space; here is an intuition of a cube (Figure 4).

The structure that gets into experience as the intuition of a cube

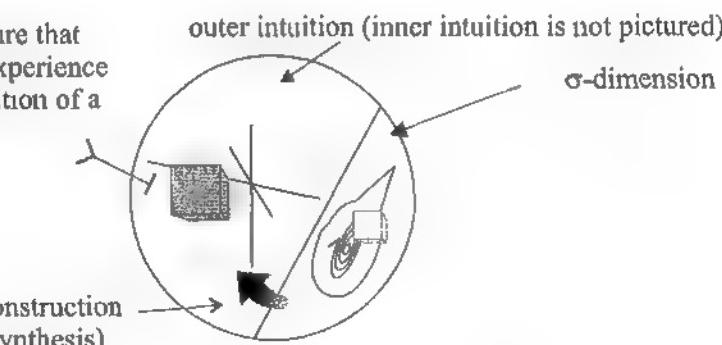


Figure 4

Needless to say, when it comes back here to the item pictured on the left,

<sup>6</sup>Cf. Sellars' discussion in *SM*, Appendix.

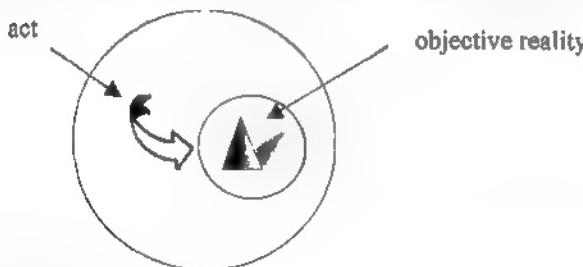
according to Kant, this is something that is constructed. So what I am doing is abstracting, from the larger account, certain facets which are involved in Kant's philosophy, but which don't, of themselves, stand on their own feet. They are part of a much larger context.

## Chapter 16: The Analogies

### A. Representables; available contents

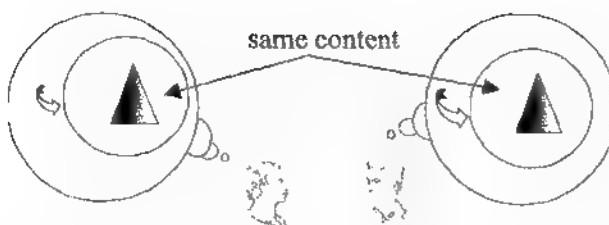
1. Turn to the *Analogies*. I pointed out that the key to the *Analogies* is to be found in the definition of judgment in the section 19 of the B edition deduction; and I spoke then of representables belonging together. Kant is, after all, an idealist. He wants to say that, in some sense, the objects of experience exist through being represented. Their *esse* is through being represented. At times, particularly in the first edition, he puts that very baldly, as though an object of experience existed only insofar as it is actually being represented. But, like all philosophers who start out by taking this kind of stance, a distinction soon looms in the background between that which is *actually* represented and that which is a *possible* or, we might say, an *attainable*, an *available* representable.

2. Descartes, when he is talking about ideas, rides roughshod over distinctions which, in the relevant context, he actually draws, but never systematically spells out. For example, I represent a triangle (Figure 1).



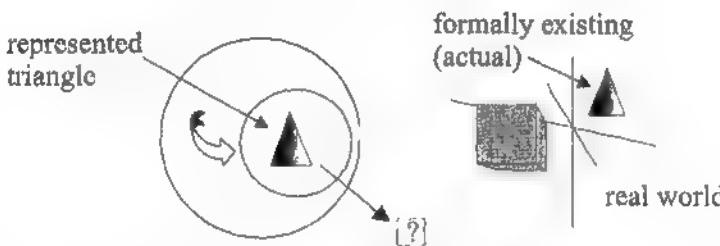
**Figure 1**

This triangle which I represent is an idea and it is something which is the objective reality of this act. Descartes starts out by tying the content very strongly to the act so that this content couldn't exist apart from that particular act. But, then, it becomes very clear to the Cartesians (Descartes himself in some sense) that the content that I represent, although as content it is something capable of being the content of the act, is independent of any particular act. So that in an important sense, the content of this act (Figure 2, left) can be the *same* as content of this act (Figure 2, right).



**Figure 2**

3. Now this kind of "sameness" is, of course, a matter of having the same objective reality. Here is a formally existing triangle in the real world (Figure 3).



**Figure 3**

In the physical world, it is existing, not as the content of any representation, but as an actual triangle. But when I represent a triangle, there may be no actual triangle. In other words, as we would put it, there is no existential consequence which follows from my representing a triangle: namely, we cannot infer  $(\exists x)(x = \text{a triangle})$ . So we have to distinguish between the act and content.

4. This is the danger of the diagrams, of course, that what gets pictured as a content looks like a sort of encapsulated triangle and next to it is an unencapsulated triangle. But this is just a way, you will remember, of getting across key distinctions and of getting the feeling for the fact that philosophers built their theories on metaphors which they prop against each other until you have a beautiful house of cards in which metaphor supports metaphor to make a proto-theory which may fall down. All right.

5. The fundamental theme for Descartes' philosophy is "being" as content and "being" in the world. One of the key metaphysical issues concerns the relation between them. Of course, Descartes thinks that God is the

ultimate location of contents; whether they are the same in God's mind as they are in ours gets into all the problems pertaining to hyperbolic doubt and so on (but I am not giving seminar on Descartes; so we will leave that a side). Just say that according to all these philosophers, it is God's representation of things which is really what counts.<sup>1</sup> This was why, of course, God plays such a key role in the theories of knowledge of Descartes and Malebranche and in the whole Cartesian tradition.

6. So then, there is the notion that there are the representables. They are in the understanding of God and we actually represent them. We can represent them because we were created by God who gave us the ability to represent them. God not only gives us the ability to represent them, but he also made, or created, things in accordance with these representables (Figure 4).

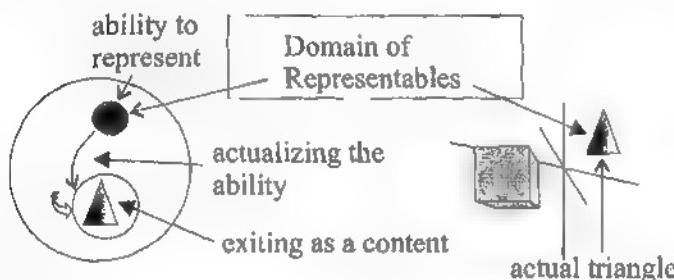


Figure 4

7. So you have two relations between the representables in God's mind and the content of the world which concerns substances. There are actual triangles; and there are perceptions of triangles or thoughts of triangles. Here (Figure 4, left) is not something actually triangular; it is merely the thought of something triangular.

8. How do we understand *thinking*? The problem now usually discussed under the heading of 'intentionality', 'intentional inexistence' and so on, was discussed in terms of the metaphor "act and content."<sup>2</sup> It is interesting to look at early Russell because in his discussion of mental states, he is prepared to make some use of the metaphor of act and content.

<sup>1</sup>Here we see why Sellars would regard the denial of God's role in Cartesian metaphysics as the ultimate anachronism. Their concept of truth itself is bound up with the objects of God's knowledge.

<sup>2</sup>We have a relation of "intending," so mental acts can intend meanings. A believing intends a meaning (in the "domain of meaning" or "conceivables"), intending is mental meaning. A belief is intending mentally. We call them meanings in the context dealing with 'S has meaning' and conceivables in the context of 'belief has meaning'. The domains are intersubjective; people can mean the same.

So, this is a long tradition which you find also in Kant.

9. I have drawn a sharp distinction between *existing as a content of a particular act* and existing in a special sense of "existing" — perhaps, as an available content. As I said, Cartesians put "available contents" in the mind of God. Kant doesn't commit himself as to the status of these available contents. You see, Kant thinks that God created the world, equipped us with our perceptual abilities, and so on. In some sense, he thinks of God as the source of these possible contents, but he also thinks that this is a metaphysical theory which cannot be established. Still, for Kant, the whole concept of truth and of objectivity involves *more* than simply actual representings; it involves *some* kind of genuine status for possible representings. So, we have to have, in some sense, the domain of the possible and here we have then the notion of the representable and there must be available contents (Figure 5).

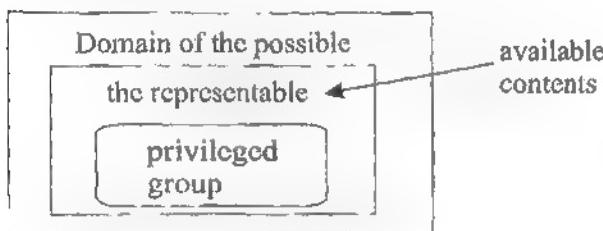


Figure 5

10. There is a privileged group of available contents which *cohere* in a certain way. What if we ask how they cohere? In a curious sense, they are the actual, or true, ones, but, for Kant, they are not true in any "correspondence" sense. They are just the privileged ones which *must* be there if the notion of truth is to make sense. So, Kant is not trying to prove that there *is* truth, that there *is* knowledge or that there *are* objects: he is *explicating* the very concept of an objectively true experience.

#### *B. Privileged available contents; correspondence for the realist*

11. Now, it turns out that this notion of the true, in part, corresponds to the realist's notion of a spatiotemporal world. If we look at a realistic position, say, a Cartesian, Lockean or Newtonian position, we have the following comparison. We have the spatiotemporal world; I use lines to represent three-dimensional space and the dimension of time (Figure 6). Here is the succession of happenings in space and time: physical space and

time. And here is, according to the Cartesian, a mind and a body that belong to each state. So, here is the "successive objective" (someone walking), in the Cartesian sense or, you might say, in the realistic sense. It is what actually happens, existing independently of mind. In addition, we have bodies, and minds that are caused, as a result, to have experiences of them.

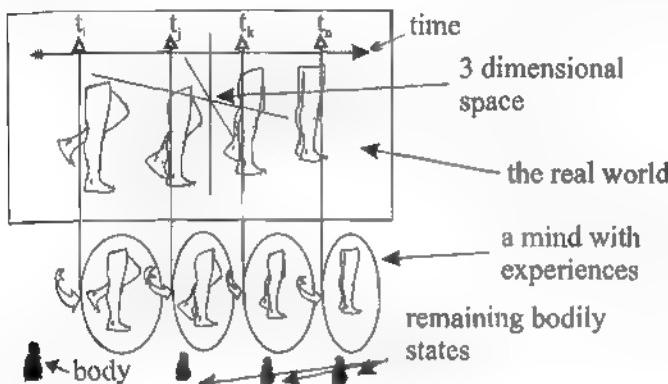


Figure 6

12. Now, one role played by the notion of the privileged system of contents is that it is, in some way, a system which is the *counterpart*, in terms of representables, of the *history* of a Newtonian spatiotemporal world or a classical spatiotemporal world. But, of course, these available contents get their place in the world in virtue of being represented. So, here is a representable,  $R_1$ , and here is a representation with that content (Figure 7).

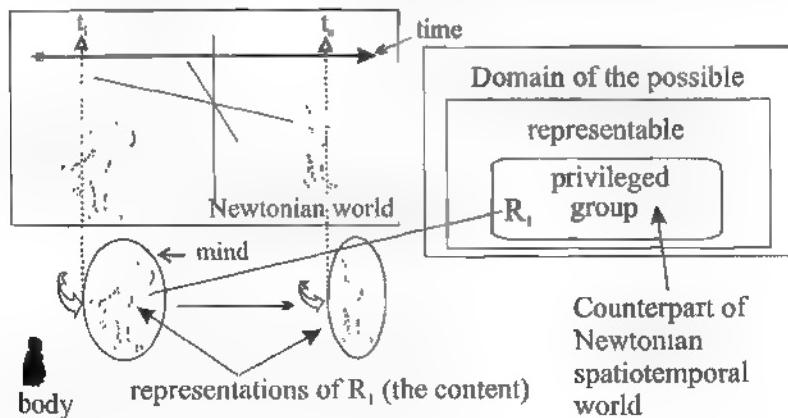


Figure 7

13. You can see that there is a kind of correspondence theory germinating here; namely, that a representation is, in a way, true if its content is one of these privileged representables belonging to this system. The privileged representable is the counterpart of the representation in the Cartesian mind that is the representation with that representable in it (Figure 7). The representation in the mind is true if, in the actual world, there is something which corresponds to that representable (call it ' $R_1$ '). Here (Figure 7) is the representation and here is an actual existent corresponding to  $R_1$ .  $R_1$  is not merely a content, or just a merely available content; it has a kind of non-content absolute reality.

### *C. Privileged representables and coherence; perspective*

14. As I said, we find in Kant's philosophy, a different interpretation of this relation of "correspondence." According to Kant, these contents can exist only as actual representeds or as available representeds; they cannot exist in this absolute way which they do for the realist. But, nevertheless, Kant obviously grants that we have thoughts, representations, and we want to distinguish between false representations and true ones. His answer is, again, in terms of coherence. There is a coherent system to which this representable belongs; therefore, the representation is true (Figure 8). This places a great deal of weight on coherence.

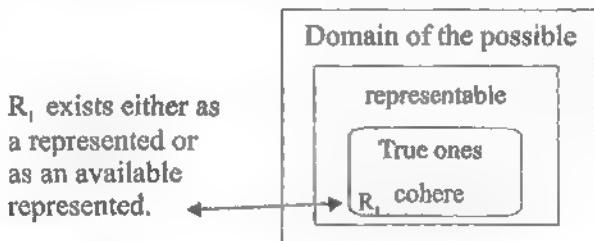


Figure 8

15. It plays another role because available contents are not merely contents pertaining to physical events; they are contents pertaining to physical events perceived from a perspective. That is how the individual gets in here. Everybody sees the world from a different series of perspectives. In a way, we have to break up this coherent realm into "perspectivalized" coherent representables.

16. You might say, every person actually represents, at a certain time,

only objects from certain points of view. But somehow, it is objectively true that if he were to make certain choices, he would have different representations. In some way, then, there are available to me contents of representations which I don't actually represent but which I would represent "if." You might say that they are "iffy" representables. So, this system of representables is somehow both intersubjective and comprehensive, but also, as it were, it is personalized. Contents which are available to me need not be available for you at the time. If I am in a certain event with respect to here, no one else can have *that* representable. That is why the coherence involves not only representables, but it has a strand in it pertaining to what one *actually* represents. It has got to be given a *temporal* perspective: it becomes more and more complicated.

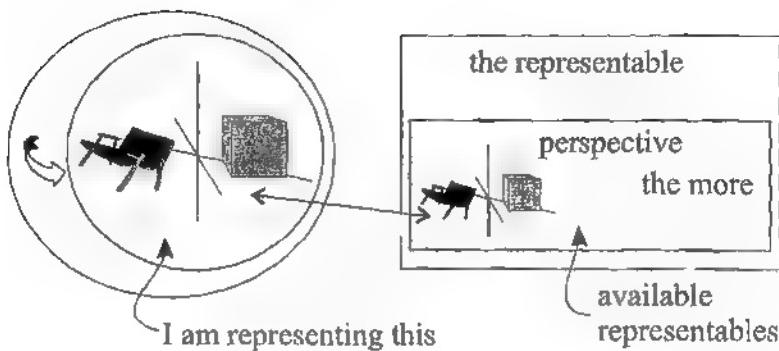
17. That is why one is so baffled by the small clues that Kant throws out when he is discussing possible experiences. It is clear that the notion of possible experiences is crucial for him, but—really—he has very little to say about it. All right.

18. I am treating these representables as though, in the first place, they are contents pertaining to the physical world obeying the laws of physics. That is one way in which they *cohere*: they have physical lawfulness. That certainly is a theme that is central to Kant's thought and it is essential to Leibniz's notion of a possible world. That must be the basic theme for all representables pertaining to the physical world. But, then, the system of representables also breaks up into perspectives, as it were, personal perspectives on the world, and furthermore, ultimately, they have to be, in a way, temporalized.

19. These are themes, you see, which we can find, at first, only suggested in the Kantian text without hoping to pin Kant down on the issues to a sort of neat account which we might want to give if we were contemporary Kantians.

#### D. Representables and nature

20. So, you might say that, according to Kant, here I am and I am representing *this* system of physical objects *seen* from this perspective: these chairs, physical bodies seen from this perspective (Figure 9).



**Figure 9**

That is, of course, what I am actually representing. But, one must not forget, that there is always a "more", so to speak, which I am not representing but can have an, as it were, "indefinite" representation of. According to Kant, in representing these objects so situated from a point of view, I don't see the backs of them; I see only the fronts of them. I don't see what is beyond the walls. But I always experience them as *part of nature*. So you might say that the basic form of experience of objects is:

objects in nature from a point of view.

So, all the background is, as the phenomenologists put it, the foreshadow of a "more" (Figure 9). The "more" is thought of as, ultimately, coherently connected with what I experience; that something "more" is, for Kant, the coherently and lawfully connected available representations.<sup>3</sup>

#### *E. Time and truth; time is not perceptible*

21. The *Analogy*s tell us something about objects in time and they also tell us about time and truth. Whenever I judge that a certain state of affairs obtains, according to section 19, I think of myself with certain contents,

<sup>3</sup>Sellars is in the process of discussing how the *Analogy*s explain Kant's idealism. Judgments involve laws that relate events, represented obtainables, to the "obtainedness" of other events. From the Transcendental point of view, true judgeables are facts (they don't merely correspond to them), the objectivity of which consists in "subjecting the representations to a rule" (B243). Thus, the constituents of judgments belong together as a result of the unity of apperception: nature as a privileged system of possible objects is the actualization of the unity of apperception. Truth results from the interplay of intersubjective and objective unity and is constituted by the way these belong together (or, perhaps, are brought together).

representables, belonging to each other regardless of what I think. So, an experience in which I represent them together has an objectivity which I may fail to get on other occasions when I have false beliefs and misperceptions.

22. Now, let us see how the situation is according to a transcendental realist. Suppose that a certain event belongs at this time (Figure 10).

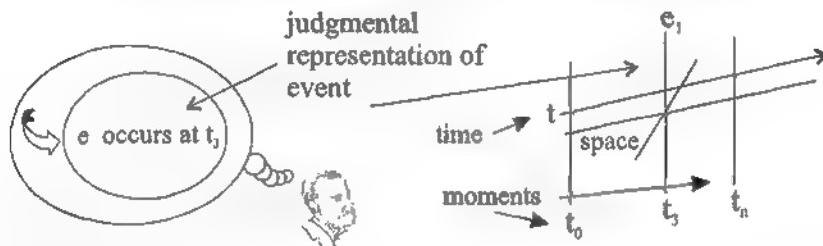


Figure 10

Here we have  $t_0, \dots, t_n$ . Suppose that  $e_1$  belongs at  $t_3$ . Well, for a realist this simply means that, in point of fact, in the objective world, an event has occurred at that time. And, if I represent, "e<sub>1</sub> is occurring at  $t_3$ ", then my judgment is true because it corresponds to something in the independent world.

23. Of course, this is not the answer Kant gives. He invokes *something like this* because something like this will be present in any account. But what we are looking for is the peculiar feature of Kant's philosophy.

24. Now, look at our system of privileged representables. Time is something that I represent. Time is a representable: among the representables is time (Figure 11).

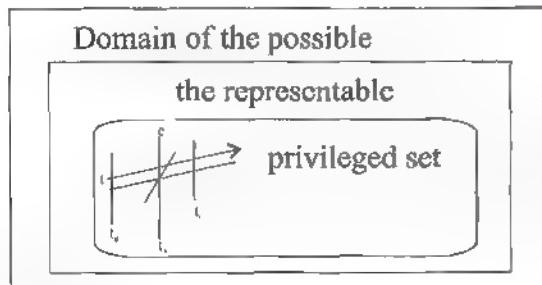


Figure 11

The time of event  $e_1$  is a representable; so there is the representable "event  $e_1$  is at time  $t_3$ ". Now let us take the theme from section 19. Obviously, what Kant is going to tell us is that in order for there to be truth pertaining to the occurrence of events, the event as representable must belong to a certain moment of time. In other words, the representable "moment  $t_3$ " and the representable "event  $e_1$ " must somehow belong together. Furthermore, it must be knowable that they belong together because we are concerned not just with truth but with the knowable.<sup>4</sup>

25. Of course, we are concerned with "in principle knowable truth," because not all truths are in point of fact knowable. But there is a very strong connection between knowability and truth. Verificationism goes so neatly together with part of the classical tradition that we often overlook the fact that some kind of knowability theme has been common to many philosophies other than positivism. We might think of a more generalized form of verificationism according to which truth is something which is knowable: there isn't merely an accidental connection between the concept of truth and the concept of knowability. This is certainly Kant's view and, of course, it involves directly his theory of the temporal relations of events.

26. Now, time, according to Kant, is an intuition so that we have intuitive representations of time. Notice (it comes out most clearly in the *Second Analogy*) what is present in all the *Analogies*. You find it, for example, at B233:

For time cannot be perceived in itself, and what precedes and what follows cannot, therefore, by relation to it, be empirically determined in the object.

Time is the key theme here. Kant tells us that time can be intuited. Indeed it is intuited, but it is not perceived.

27. If we were Newtonians and thought of time as independently real, we might have a philosophical hunch that we experienced time. In experience, we perceive events. If only we could check and just, as it were, look at the moments and look at the events, from the outside, so to speak, then we could *perceive* that this event happens at that moment. Thus, if there were an object called time and an event here of a certain kind, say, a flash of lightning, you could say, "well, time is an object, the event is an object,

<sup>4</sup> The event's belonging to a time, i.e., its existence as an actually intuited representable, is a representation that belongs to the world as a privileged system of items belonging together in accordance with rules, belonging together (through synthesis) as part of a system. Sellars examines Kant's method for arguing that the world as a temporal structure is irreducibly perspectival but not 'subjective' in a pejorative sense. Cf *TWO* (38), pp. 567-594.

and, after all, we experience time just as we experience lightning." Could we not, as it were, simply look and see that the lightning belongs to a moment of time?

28. Of course, someone who holds that time is a special kind of an object would not want to say that it is a perceptible object. The same point comes out in the case of space. If you take space to be a container in which objects are located, we can think of objects in space as generating experiences of the facts on our sense organs, but we cannot make sense of the idea that space *itself* causes us to have a sensation of space, a perception of space. That is why the empiricists were always very uneasy about container space: if there were such a thing, how could we know it?

29. Those themes are all lurking in Kant here, you see. When he says that time is not perceptible, he means, literally, that time is not the sort of thing that can, as it were, generate the perception of time in the way that a chair creates the perception of a chair. Nevertheless, we do have an intuitive understanding of what time is, of time as a special kind of entity which is not reducible. So what is Kant going to say? He says that, for it to be objectively true that this event belongs at this moment and for it to be knowable, the knowability cannot consist in our simply perceiving the moment of time and the event. He argues that the only way in which we can know the temporal *belongingness* of events to moments of time is knowing the way in which the events belong to each other.<sup>5</sup>

#### F. Moments and events

30. Take the theme of section 19 of the Transcendental Deduction—the notion of representables belonging together. Then in the *Analogies* he tells us that we cannot perceive the relationship of events to time. All we can do is to find a *counterpart ordering* of events which makes them *appropriate* to momenta of time as simultaneous or successive. So, we can know only the belonging, the matching up, as it were, of events to moments indirectly through the matching up of events among each other: fundamentally

<sup>5</sup>In *TWO* (p. 527), Sellars remarks that "the 'problem of time' is rivaled only by the 'mund-body problem' in the extent to which it inexorably brings into play all the major concerns of philosophy." This chapter allows us to see why this is so. When Kant says that we cannot perceive the relationship of events to time but only a "*counterpart ordering* of events which makes them *appropriate* to momenta of time," then the only way "we know the temporal *belongingness* of events to moments of time is by knowing the way in which the events belong to each other." The belongingness is understood in terms of causality (successiveness) and interaction (simultaneity). In other words, ultimately, there are no such things as temporal relations (*TWO*, p. 550): relational, temporal statements pertaining to events are, themselves, grounded in nonrelational statements pertaining to things (*TWO*, p. 573).

causally, as we shall see.

31. This means that we don't have moment  $t_3$  to pick up independently of the events that occur. It isn't as though there were a natural ordering of moments, as contrasted to events. We know that there is time. We can think of

*the moment which belongs to this event which belongs to this coherent structure of events and that coherent structure is defined in terms of causality and interaction.*

Causality is, for Kant, conceptually tied to successiveness and interaction to simultaneity. All right: that is the central theme.

32. Kant is not trying to prove here that there is truth with respect to temporal location. He is analyzing what is involved in the concept of truth. Secondly, he is relating truth to knowability and, in particular, experienced knowability because "knowability" includes all manners of knowing.

33. He wants to say that the notion of events belonging to a certain moment, or to different moments, is basic, but that there is no direct way that we can pair up events and moments, particularly by way of perception. We have to do it *indirectly* by knowing how the events belong together. Then we can pick out moments as

the moments in which this event occurred,  
the moment in which that event occurred, and so on.

So our knowledge of the temporal order is primarily a knowledge of the causal order of events. It is a causal theory of the knowability of the temporal order: it is not a causal theory of time.

#### *G. The causal order and the changing of time: an analogy*

34. There are three modes of time: duration, succession, and simultaneity. Kant applies the *First Analogy* to duration; the *Second Analogy*, to succession; the *Third Analogy*, to simultaneity. They all pertain to the knowability of these features of time.

35. Now, I want you to realize how funny time is. Philosophers have lived and died with the problem of time and it has often been characterized as the most difficult. Time is a funny thing, particularly if you approach it as we have through the *Aesthetic*. Plato speaks of time as the moving image

of eternity, and that is something well worth pondering upon. It is changing ('moving' means changing); time is the changing image of eternity. Time changes. These are familiar themes and they have to be taken very seriously.<sup>6</sup>

36. We can find them in Kant. "Time changes" is ambiguous as Kant sees it. On the one hand, he wants to say that time doesn't change. We find some passages in which Kant says time changes and some in which he says, "time doesn't change." Of course, the key to this lies in the fact that when Kant says that time doesn't change, he is insisting that there is only one time; there is no replacement of one time by another. There may be, in some sense, the replacement of one part of time by another part of time, but they are "parts" of *one* time. So, if we use the word 'time' to mean a whole time, when Kant says that time doesn't change, he means really that there is only one time. All so-called times are parts of the one time.

37. It is a point that he made in the *Aesthetic* about space: there is only one space, and so-called spaces are parts of one space. All times are parts of one time. It would be a mistake to assume that times consisted of a togetherness of one whole time and another whole time. As Kant would put it, the parts of time are not parts in the sense that it is built out of them; they depend for their existence on the whole time.

38. Now, in what sense does time change? Well, you all know the answer to that. Let us look at the temporal series here (Figure 12).

<sup>6</sup>Sellars gives new life to the Platonic metaphor (*Timaeus*, 37D). As he points out, "We must remind ourselves that in the framework of things it is things which come to be and cease to be, and that the event which is the coming to be or the ceasing to be of a thing itself neither comes to be nor ceases to be but (like all events) simply takes place" (*TWO*, p. 572). Temporal facts concern changes in changing things that have taken place, on the one hand, and which are about to take place on the other (*TWO*, p. 594). Thus, time is a reaxiomatization of the framework of changing things introduced as a metrical framework rather than as part of the content of the world. The *Analogy* (Kant applies the *First Analogy* to duration; the *Second Analogy*, to succession; the *Third Analogy*, to simultaneity) bear out the fact that "The existence of the world as well as of the 'events' which make it up is irreducibly perspectival. The structure of the world as a temporal structure is irreducibly perspectival . ." (*TWO*, p. 593). Time as a metrical framework can arise only in so far as it reflects a texture of changing things which arises, itself, because things are the synthesized constituents of the domain of obtainable representables

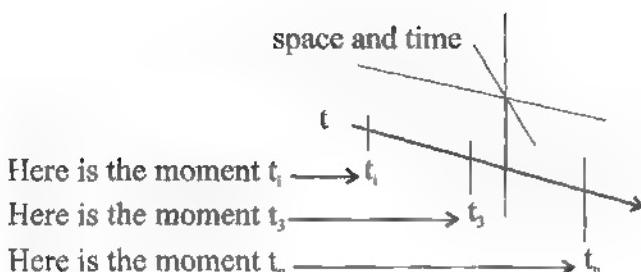


Figure 12

Here is the moment  $t_1$ , here is the moment  $t_2$ , here is the moment  $t_3$ ,

39. Well, if you are taking very seriously the distinction between time and the events which are its contents, then a basic fact about time—one we all know about and we all cut our teeth on—is the distinction between the A-series and the B-series: the distinction between earlier and later and past-present-future. If we take time as distinct from its contents, then there are certain very peculiar events which pertain to time. Namely, first of all,  $t_1$  is present and then  $t_2$  is present and then  $t_3$  is present. It is a basic feature of time—one which, on the Kantian account, is built into our intuition of time—that if  $t_2$  is between  $t_1$  and  $t_3$ , then  $t_2$ 's being present, or being now, is between  $t_1$ 's being now and  $t_3$ 's being now. There is a very funny, purely temporal kind of change which occurs if you take the container view of time seriously: namely, that time is constantly changing. This moment was first future, then present, then past.

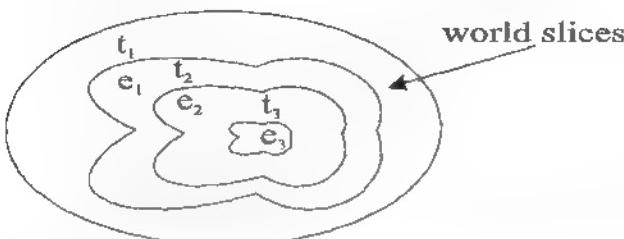
40. I am not concerning myself here with the puzzles that McTaggart unnecessarily got us into, but I am reminding you that time changes. And Kant does see an analogy. What are we looking for? What in the world does Kant mean by ‘analogy’? What is analogous to what? Well, one theme that is undoubtedly present in one of the discussions of the *Second Analogy* is that this purely temporal feature of time, namely,

that  $t_3$  cannot be present without  $t_2$ 's first being present so that  $t_2$ 's having been present is a necessary condition of  $t_3$ 's being present (now)

is, he thinks, an analog of the causal relationship.

41. View this as whole slices of the world (Figure 13). The idea is, considered purely temporally, that just as we have the necessary order  $t_1$ ,  $t_2$ ,  $t_3$  with respect to presentnesses, just so, in respect to the causal relation-

ship, causal laws determine that  $e_2$  occurs between  $e_3$  and  $e_1$ .



**Figure 13**

That is an analogy which Kant calls attention to. I mean, it is not offered really as an argument, but it certainly emphasizes that for Kant a necessary feature of the way in which time, as a peculiar kind of entity, changes is reflected in the causal order, in the necessity involved in the causal order of events.

#### *H. The First Analogy*

42. Let's look at the *First Analogy*. The *First Analogy* is designed to explain, or is concerned with the principle of, the permanence of substance.

In all change of appearances substance is permanent; its quantum in nature is neither increased nor diminished. (B224)

The very first thing that you have to appreciate, which is very basic, is that the word 'substance' is being used in a very classical sense. When Kant is talking about substance at this point, he has in mind what Aristotle does when he is talking about prime matter.

43. You see, according to Aristotle, ultimately, all predication is predication of matter. It is a certain portion of matter which is a tree. We can say, "this portion of matter is a tree". There we are predicating a certain substantial form of a certain portion of matter. If you want to say that a tree is green, then we are predicating something of the tree. And the tree for Aristotle is a substratum in one sense: the tree is a substance in Aristotle's sense. It has the character of being, let us say, green and leafy. But there is another sense of substratum in which the substratum of predication is prime matter.

44. Now, what is Aristotle's characterization of prime matter? Well, it

is usually thought to be essentially a sort of characterless, ontological—what shall I say—kind of dough, a kind of characterless dough. Though it seems kind of determinate because all the dough I ever ran into had character, it is a sort of featureless dough. In point of fact, Aristotle allows for the possibility that fire might be prime matter. Think of fire here as sort of good old flame—burn, burn, burn. You know, after all, Heraclitus had held that the world was made of flame. Thales choose water. There were various stuffs and Aristotle conceptually allows for the possibility that there might be prime matter which is of a definite character, a definite mass term applying to it. You know it might be a great quantity of red, a great red object. As a matter of fact, Anaxagoras thought that there was a certain quantity of red, of green, of sweet, and of sour: all these were thought of on the model of stuff.

45. Then we had the problem of how do they fit together? Aristotle in his *Physics* tries to develop a theory of change and of coming into being and ceasing to be. He goes on, then, to develop a very sophisticated theory of prime matter which doesn't identify it with any empirical stuff like the hot or the cold or the moist or the dry. In a certain sense, matter does, at least metaphorically, become something that is, as it were, a stuff neutral between hot, cold, moist and dry. That is built into his theory of matter because of the requirements of his physics and his biology.

46. But, in any case, Aristotle thought that this stuff was indestructible: it neither came into being nor did it cease to be. You can imagine a kind of quasi-Aristotelian argument for this. I can put it this way. Suppose that we know that time has no beginning and no end; time is infinite *a parte ante* and into the future, infinite at both ends so to speak. Suppose that we also know that time is ontologically dependent upon change: no change, no time. Since time is infinite in its way, there must also be change throughout; there must be motion. (The word 'kinesis' is often used narrowly in the sense of spatial motion and more widely for change.) Assume that we know that change is always change, ultimately, of matter so that we get a connection between time, change and matter.

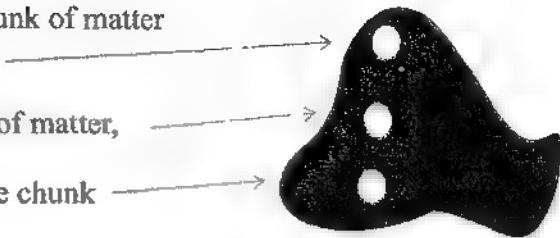
47. So, we know that time is everlasting in this sense, and that the parts that change are matter. Could we allow the possibility that matter, that some little chunk of matter, might cease to be? No! A thousand times "No!" because if one little chunk of matter could cease to be, perhaps another little chunk of matter could cease to be and perhaps another, and another (Figure 14).

perhaps this little chunk of matter  
could cease to be,

and this little chunk of matter,

and perhaps this little chunk  
of matter.

**Figure 14**



It might be contagious; perhaps it could all cease to be. Supposing all matter popped out of existence here. There wouldn't be any change here and so time would not be infinite. There is a quasi-Aristotelian argument for the eternity of matter.

48. Who do you suppose fosters this quasi-Aristotelian argument? Immanuel Kant. We know that time is infinite; that is given in intuition. It is given in intuition *as* infinite. Let us consider that there is nothing going on in some stretch of time. Well, bring in the knowability requirement. Kant tells us that an empty time is not an object of empirical knowledge. About the best place to find a nice tidy statement of this is in the *First Analogy* (A188/B231). Kant is clearly buying in on the Aristotelian notion of prime matter as the subject of all change, as that basic stuff of the world. He says,

For this permanent is what alone makes possible the representation of the transition from one state to another, and from not-being to being. These transitions can be empirically known only as changing determinations of that which is permanent. (A188/B231)

And then he says,

If we assume that something absolutely begins to be, we must have a point of time in which it was not. But to what are we to attach this point, if not to that which already exists? For a preceding empty time is not an object of perception. (A188/B231)

49. Notice, when he says, "if we assume that something absolutely begins to be," he means, by this, not something particular like this chair or a table or tree. The context makes it clear it is defined as an *empty* time. An empty time is a time in which *nothing* occurs; not even a beginning of

a chair or a table; just nothing occurs. As I said, we are not concerned with this in the sense of objects—a chair, a table. Just suppose that a whole world slice comes into being—the absolute beginning of something. Suppose that something absolutely begins to be. If we think of this world slice as coming to be, then, he says, empty time here is not an object of perception. But if we connect this coming to be with things which previously existed and persist in existence up to the moment of this coming to be, “this latter [world slice, ws] must be simply a determination of what is permanent in that which precedes it.”

50. In other words, for reasons which he also supports in the argument from causality, empty time cannot be the cause of anything. Empty time cannot explain why this world slice comes to be; but he argues, independently of that, that if we recognize that empty time is not a possible object of knowledge, then we cannot have, in our picture, holes. Therefore, we would tie these two slices together (Figure 15).

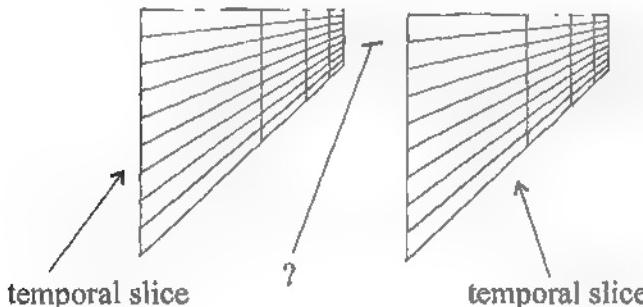


Figure 15

He argues, then, that there would be no empty time there. What we would have is a stuff which, is at this stage, characterized in these ways and at this stage, which occurs right after, characterized in certain other ways. We would have just another case of the change of the stuff. And that is why he puts it this way:

But if we connect the coming to be with things which previously existed, and which persist in existence up to the moment of this coming to be, this latter must simply be a determination of what is permanent in that which precedes it. (A188/B231)

51. But, as I said, the fundamental theme is that if matter could cease

to be, then there would be empty time. There cannot be any empty time in the knowable world; therefore matter cannot cease to be. Now what is the analogy here? Well?<sup>7</sup>

52. You will notice that in the *Second Analogy*, you have a repetition of that theme on empty time:

For an event which should follow upon an empty time, that is, a coming to be preceded by no state of things... (A192/B237)

As I said, this means literally a time in which nothing happens anywhere over the whole, not just some little local region. That is the same theme that we have in the *First Analogy*.

53. People tend to have sort of this picture when they look at it (Figure 16).

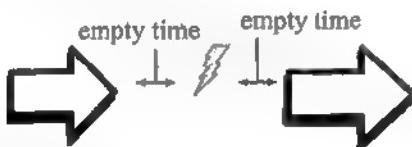


Figure 16

Here is time, where time has this great big fat arrow because, after all, some things are simultaneous so that time has a kind of robustness which is not captured simply by a single line. When they think of an empty time, they think of something like this, you know: here is a flash of lightning, preceded by empty time. But if you read the text, it is quite clear that Kant means something like that time in which nothing is happening across the whole breadth of the universe—a very metaphysical and very radical notion, not a notion which pertains to a little local bit of empty time which might precede a popping into existence of a dog (which is the example people use).

54. Suppose there is a dog which suddenly pops into existence from nothing; so we have a little chunk of empty time in there. As I said, that is not what Kant is doing at all. He does often use the word 'substance' in a very Aristotelian sense to mean things like peas, carrots and so on, but it is clear that in the *First Analogy* he means by substance, stuff which is prime matter.

<sup>7</sup>Time abiding and matter.

### I. The Third Analogy

55. Now the *Third Analogy*, of course, is bound up with this notion of simultaneity. Simultaneity we can image: causal changes occurring in matter which are, as it were, independent. Here is a causal series of changes in the stuff; and here is another series (Figure 17).

We can depict a causal series of changes in stuff,  $\alpha$ : 

And we can depict another,  $\beta$ : 



**Figure 17**

Abstractly, this would seem to be logically possible and yet the demands of the notion of time require that either the changes in  $\alpha$  be simultaneous with those in  $\beta$  or not be simultaneous with those in  $\beta$ .

56. The principle of interaction makes it knowable in principle whether two events are simultaneous. In order for it to be knowable in principle that two events are simultaneous, it must not be simply a matter that we look at time and the events and perceive that they are simultaneous. It must be a matter of the actual intelligible connection between the events. That, Kant arranges by building on the notion of matter and the notion, you see, that portions of matter affect other portions of matter. We have the notion of a connectedness of all these, as it were, world lines in terms of interaction between something that is happening here and something that is happening there. There is a connection by virtue of which knowable events,  $e_1, e_2, e_3, e_4$  belong to the same moment of time.

57. Kant clearly has in mind the role played in Newtonian physics by a universal principle of gravitation. But the general idea is that there is only one time and events all occur in one time. Then the problem is to explicate what it is to know that some events are at the same time. According to Kant, in addition to the dimension of simultaneity, the knowability involves the notion of reciprocity or interaction.

58. Again, Kant is not trying to prove that there is a knowable order in time and space. He is asking what is involved in the concept of a knowable order in space and time. What is involved in the notion that two events belong to the same time? What is involved in the notion that two events

belong to a succession of time? So, if you are looking for proofs of causality, you won't find them in Kant. You will find something that can be a theory of causality: namely, an argument designed to show that the belongingness of events to each other in accordance with a rule is the notion of events as *belonging to times*.<sup>8</sup>

### *J. Subjective and objective succession: the Second Analogy*

59. The notions of subjective and objective succession are, again, an explication of, rather than a direct argument for, what is involved in the knowability of events with respect to time. Kant gives some examples of the distinction between objective and subjective successions. He takes a very simple example because his point is really very straightforward. The fundamental distinction can be illustrated as follows, and we can do it in terms of *the physical in space and time*.<sup>9</sup>

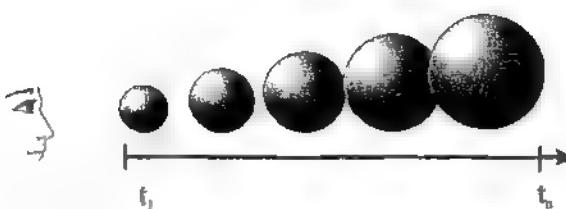
60. Suppose that we consider two alternative situations concerning what is immediately perceived. Let's say that we have one situation in which there is one balloon which is expanding, growing larger and larger and larger, and another situation in which there are a cluster of different-sized balloons, each a little larger than the next.

61. In the first case, I see a balloon growing larger through time (Figure 18). This is a case of objective change.

<sup>8</sup>The schematized category of causality, i.e., what we mean by causality, concerns the idea that being an event of one kind entails being related to an event of another as ground to consequent (see *IKTE* (103), ¶43, for example). The complex discussion in this chapter draws together themes from *KTI* (98) (¶48-53) and *ITC* (77) (§50-56). The privileged representables, with which the chapter begins, emerge as objects for us only because they exist in an economy of causal and temporal facts. At issue is the sense in which a house, say, is the object of successive acts of apprehension for the empirical self yet, from the transcendental point of view, constituted by the self in pure apperception. That is, how can a house be an object of empirical knowledge on the one hand yet, on the other, be constructed through the synthetic activity of the self in pure apperception? We are shown how time, as Plato's changing image of eternity, causality and objectivity are inextricably linked to truth.

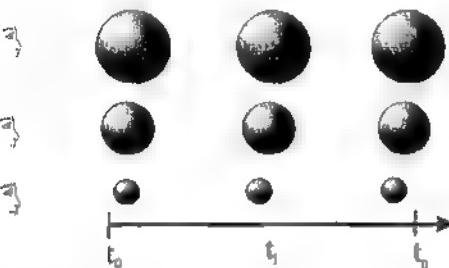
<sup>9</sup>In *SM*, Appendix, ¶15-19, Sellars comments about the evolution of Kant's views on the nature appearances in space and time. In particular, if space and time are forms of intuition, what does that tell us about how we are able to experience ordinary objects in space and time?

In contrast to his compressed comments in *SM*, here we see a clear pictorial account in which Sellars illustrates that Kant overcomes his 'subjectivist' or 'phenomenalistic' tendencies in the second edition Refutation of Idealism. In the final diagrams of this section, where Sellars pulls together all the elements introduced, we see an empirical object (a balloon) as both a state of the empirical self and as a physical structure intuited in Space (labeled 'represented non-representings' in the diagram). Although Sellars does not say so here, if we take Kant to have settled the issue of appearances in Time (see *SM*, Appendix, ¶16), the balloon is intuited in Space and Time.



**Figure 18**

62. Consider the second situation in which we are looking at balloons (small, mid-sized, large, and so on) where each one stays the same size; the first stays small, the next stays slightly larger and so on (Figure 19).



**Figure 19**

63. We can imagine a situation in which perceptually we couldn't distinguish between these situations; I mean that there is no means of distinguishing between them perceptually. Thus, for example, suppose I am not paying attention to other things; or, we could complicate the example by imagining that there is a room that is unchanging (or, changing) with respect to the perceiver.

64. But, the point is that I am here, at this moment (as in Figure 19),  $t_0$ , looking at the smaller one, then the larger one at  $t_i$ , then the largest at  $t_n$  (Figure 20).

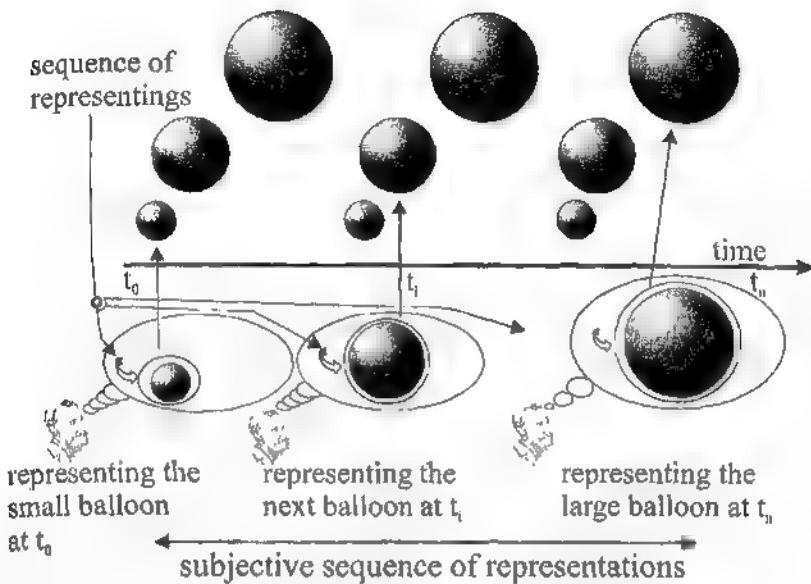


Figure 20

In the other situation (as in Figure 18), at  $t_1$ , I am here looking at this one growing larger, and later I am here, at  $t_n$ , looking at it growing larger still (Figure 21).

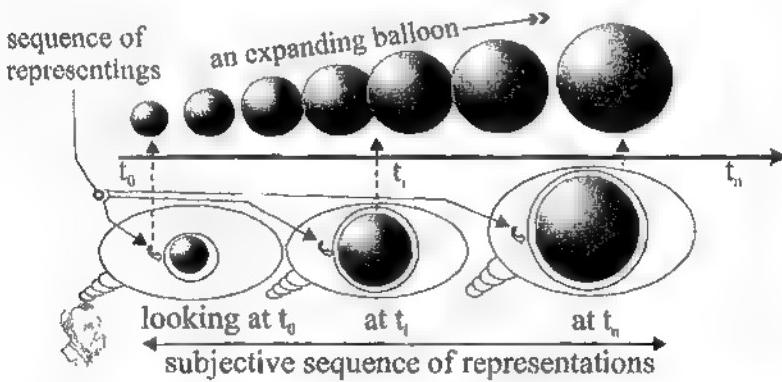


Figure 21

65. Let's abstract from my knowledge of my motion. The story could be told in such a way that we wouldn't have to mess with that. The point

is that at this time here ( $t_0$ ), I am seeing a balloon of a certain size; later ( $t_1$ ) I am seeing a balloon of a certain size; here ( $t_n$ ), of another size. The subjective sequence of representations in the two cases (Figures 20 and 21) is the same.

66. What we need to bring into the picture in order to differentiate the two cases is simply that conceptually we would distinguish between these two with reference to the relation of ourselves as perceivers to the object. What I perceive is a *function* of, not only the *object*, but my *perspectives* of the object.<sup>10</sup> Notice that it is a truth that our perceptual world is a perspectival world. We see not only chairs and tables, but we see them from a certain point of view, i.e., from *here*, from where I am. Where I —an embodied perceiver—*am located*.

67. Given this truth about perception, we can draw a conceptual distinction between similar experiences. We specify, in the one case, that the perceiver isn't changing but the object is and, therefore, the perceiver is having certain sequences of experiences. The sequence is a function, so to speak, of a change in the object and that is what Kant calls “objective succession”.

68. So, we have two sequences of experiences which qua experiences are exactly alike as far as our story is concerned, abstracting from everything else. But we can still understand what it means to say that we are really experiencing three unchanging objects. We do it by saying, “well, we can have the same series of *subjective* experiences either in that way there (Figure 22) or in this way here” (Figure 23).

<sup>10</sup>“We respond to the impressions of sense,” according to Sellars, “by conceptually representing a temporal me embedded in a spatio-temporal nature” (*SM*, ch. II, ¶42). He now goes on to explain that, viewed transcendently, changes in objects are a matter of how appearances actually go together. His ingenious picture uses the idea of the seamless homogeneity of “my” perspectives of an object to give meaning to the notion of the transcendent unity of apperception. Insofar as these personal perspectives are temporalized, they exhibit an intersubjectively valid order (see B234, *SM*, ch. II, §§52ff, and *Prolegomena*, Part II, §18ff). Ultimately, the rule conformity of objects is their standing in relationships determined by cause and effect (in the present case). Yet, since their connections are due to their conformity to judgmental form, the source of their unity (as representeds in one consciousness) is the objective unity of apperception that Sellars pictures next. The objective unity refers to the valid order of apprehensions, the privileged representables determined by the rule conforming relationships in which objects stand (cf. A111-112).

objective succession: a balloon enlarging

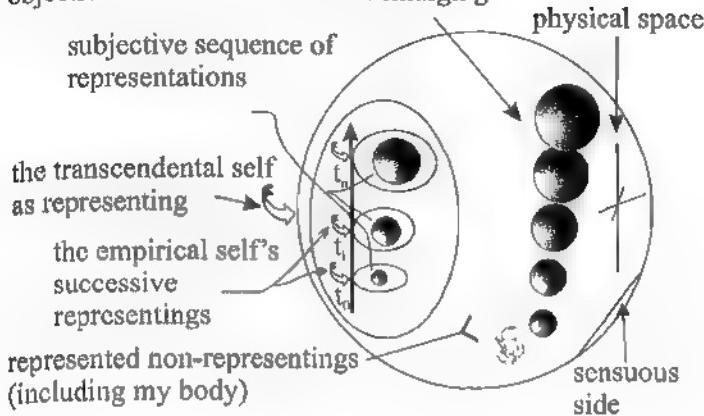


Figure 22

69. How does causality come in? It comes in very simply: namely, perceptions are caused; our perceptual experiences belong to the causal order. When we distinguish between objective and subjective succession (which is a very misleading way of referring to the distinction), Kant's point is that there are similar subjective successions in both cases. In the one case (Figure 22), the subjective succession is a function simply of the object and it can therefore be called objective succession. In the other case (Figure 23), the similar sequence of experiences, you might say, the "subjective series", is a function of, not changes in the objects, but changes in the relation of the perceiver to the objects. So, roughly, the experiences of the perceiver, in the one case, are to be understood causally in terms of causation of perceptions caused by a changing object and, in the other case, in terms of perceptions which are caused by the changing relation of the

perceiver to a group of objects, none of which is changing.<sup>11</sup>

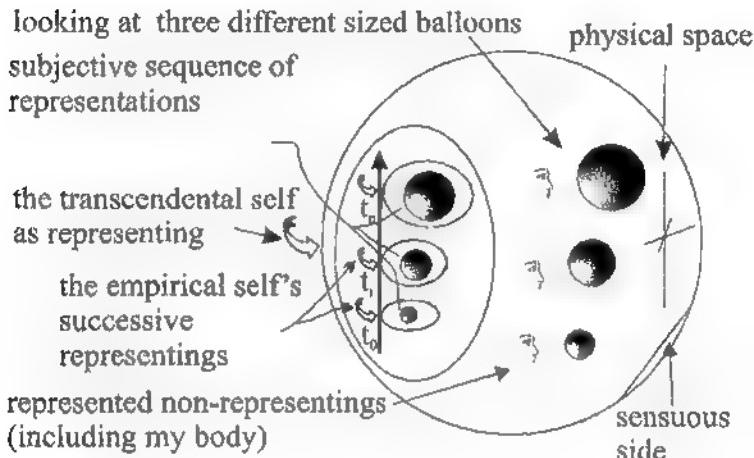


Figure 23

70. So, as I said, the simple contrast between objective succession and subjective succession is dangerous because, in each case, there is a complete objectivity involved. It is simply that we can speak of one sequence as merely subjective in the sense that it is a causal function of a changing perceiver. So, in that sense, we might say that it is subjective, but that would mean, not that it is *merely* subjective, but that it is a function of the changing relation of the perceiver to the objects. So, the word ‘subjective’ should be watched like a hawk. Here, it doesn’t mean “subjective” in the sense of having no epistemic authority, being merely a play of representa-

<sup>11</sup> Sellars’ commentary on Figures 22 and 23 occurs in *SM*, ch. II, ¶41ff. The subjective unity of apperception, consisting (in the figures, on the left) of a subjective succession of representings, is the unity of states of empirical consciousness qua represented representings. The objective unity of apperception (in the figures, on the right) as what is represented by the transcendental self (the representing act of which is depicted on the extreme left) is drawn to illustrate that objective necessity (the “objective relation” in B234) is given in terms of how our appearances hang together. As representings of the transcendental self, objects are constituted by and in thinking them through those judgmental forms that yield their unity as representeds in one consciousness. In the second edition Refutation of Idealism, Kant comes to emphasize experience as both knowledge of appearances and knowledge of reality as it appears and allows for the two parallel strands of appearance that Sellars pictures here (see *SM*, ch. II, ¶37 and Appendix, ¶17). For a discussion of time as a characteristic of representeds (items on the right side of the figures) and Kant’s problems here, see *SM*, Appendix, ¶17ff.

tions, a phantasmagoria. Granted that in each case there is a subjective sequence, one of them is called "objective" if the causal factor, the distinguishing causal factor, is a changing thing and the other is called "subjective" (in a non-pejorative sense) if the causal factor is the changing relation of the perceiver to unchanging things.

71. I would like you to brood about the *Analogies* and at the beginning of next period, I would like you to raise questions. I have attempted to give an overall picture of Kant theory of time as a form of intuition and his theory of time as far as it concerns empirical truths.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> A useful application of Kant's perspective appears in *JKTE*. Sellars explicates the representations of the empirical self (insofar as they provide the subject of judgment) as complex demonstrative conceptualizations generated by the productive imagination (see ¶36). Sellars also brings in the role of the categories in bringing about the representations. Since Kant's discussion leaves out the role of sense in representations of the empirical self, Sellars' treatment in *JKTE* can be taken to illustrate what has to be added to round out the account of perceptual knowledge (see ¶10).

Since Sellars often used the present sections of Kant to illustrate Hume's problems, his approach is worth mentioning here. In contrast to Kant, Sellars emphasizes that Hume cannot move beyond subjective succession. Hume recognizes only the sequence of subjective succession because he limits impressions to distinct existences. Hume would say that we have an image of lightning and we have a thought that includes the elements "time now, then lightning at T<sub>1</sub>." Expecting something to happen in the future contains the elements "thought now, lightning then." When an association of the form "J believes K<sub>1</sub> will occur whenever J believes K<sub>2</sub> occurs" forms (i.e., a sequence of beliefs), Hume confuses it with "J believes whenever K<sub>1</sub>, then K<sub>2</sub>" (a belief in a sequence). But, he lacks a principle to show a transition from the particular rule in the first, to the generalization in the second. Sellars frequently illustrated the point with another example. An association of the form "J has a memory of a whiz whenever he has a memory of a bang" does not yield "J has a memory that whenever there is a whiz, there is a bang." The latter includes time in the content—Hume is not entitled to do so. See Sellars' discussion in *SM*, Appendix. Hume requires, but cannot have, a principle that whenever J has associations with respect to singular judgments, he has a general belief that corresponds to them. As a result, Kant points out that, in order to get off the ground, Hume's analysis of necessity (the general belief) smuggles the notion of time into the content of belief and projects it into the world.



## Chapter 17: Some Questions

### *A. Time and succession again*

1. Last time I talked and talked and since I covered a lot of ground, there must be a lot of questions. Does anyone have any questions to start the ball rolling?
2. Question: How can we represent time?

Here (Figure 1) we have an intuition of time, a representation of time. Kant tells us in the *Aesthetic* that we can represent time *as* infinite.

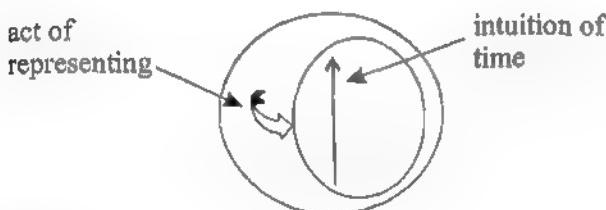


Figure 1

3. Question: But isn't that in abstraction only and not in actuality?

No, on the contrary. The intuition of time per se is not a piece of empirical knowledge.<sup>1</sup> What we are concerned with is knowledge to the effect that time has such and such a content and this comes through perception and experience. He says that time is an intuition, but that we don't perceive time. The crucial point is that if time were an object of perception as a chair is an object of perception and as flashes of lightning are objects of perception, then, presumably, we could perceive a relation between the perception of time and the flash of lightning. "Ah! That is the point at which it belongs! I see it!" What Kant is doing is abstracting: we have an intuition of time which is basic, but that is not the same thing as a perception of

<sup>1</sup>B234.

time.<sup>2</sup>

4. We intuit time and then we represent events as occurring in time. The events are directly or indirectly perceived, but the time in which we represent them is not itself perceived. It is an intuition. Does Kant think that we can represent empty time? Empty time is not a possible object of empirical knowledge. It would be like a mathematician just representing Euclidean space.

5. Question: What does Kant mean when he says, (A196/B241-2)

We have, then, to show, in the case under consideration, that we never, even in experience, ascribe succession (that is, the happening of some event which previously did not exist) to the object, and so distinguish it from subjective sequence in our apprehension, except when there is an underlying rule which compels us to observe this order of perceptions rather than any other... ?

I was curious about the word 'compel'.

The underlying rule concerns causation: I mean specific causal laws which determine why my perceptions are occurring in this order. Remember in my discussion last time of subjective and objective succession, I said that the key factor in both the perceiver and the object is that perceptual states are causally tied to objects. Therefore, the notion of our perceptions as causally brought about by objects is an essential element in the distinction between subjective and objective succession.

6. Roughly, in one case, you will remember, my perceptions occur as they do because I am caused to have them by unchanging objects which I am changing in relation to. That is the causal situation: my running around (anesthetized so that I am not aware that I am). The fact remains that, when we draw the distinction, we think of our perceptions as being causally controlled either by a changing object to which we are standing in a constant relation or by an unchanging object in which we are standing in a variable relation or something in between. (Of course, it can be changing and we can also be changing in our relations to it.) After all, our perceptions belong to the causal order for Kant and we draw the distinction

<sup>2</sup>We judge that something belongs to time; we do not see that events belong to time. If such a judgment is true, we must have reasons for assigning an event to a time. Kant here brings in causality and matter or substance. Kant, in the *First Analogy*, tries to persuade us that the physical world consists of stuff and that nature is one and this one is constantly being shaped. To Kant, matter reflects the perceptible features of the everlastingness of time. "To change" we need matter, since change is everlasting, so is time.

between objective and subjective succession—according to when the object is changing and when it isn't—by thinking of our perceptions as caused in certain ways and that involves the notion of causal laws pertaining to perceptions.

7. Thus, 'compel' means *causally necessitates*. 'Compel' is a word that is often used in connection with causation, but what he means is *necessitates*. We are conscious of an event as located at a particular point in time; that is what I was stressing last time. We think of it as causally related to other events which mutually determine it; the events mutually determine the temporal relations.

8. Actually, the rule is very complicated because the causation of our experiences is very complicated. Only in very simple cases, only when the example is very abstract as it was last time, can you speak of simple causal relations. So, causation of our perceptions is very complicated and the rule is no simple one. The idea is that however complex the rule, it involves a law: roughly, these perceptions of mine occur because of what is in the world. It is misleading to say that this involves a simple rule although we can subsume it under the abstract rule of causation. That is really what Kant is doing there. Light comes from the object and hits my eyes (sometimes the light bounces off mirrors) and sets in motion physiological processes, very complicated processes.

### B. Available representables

9. Question: When you spoke of available representables, did you mean of any possible world?

No. That would be compatible with a whole theory of possible worlds, but what I was interested in are those representables which are somehow tied to this world as opposed to other possible worlds. As a matter of fact, the passages you should study we haven't discussed: the *Antinomies*. A passage you should study appears there:

The empirical truth of appearances in space and time is, however, sufficiently secured; it is adequately distinguished from dreams, if both dreams and genuine appearances cohere truly and completely in one experience, in accordance with empirical laws.

The objects of experience, then, are *never given in themselves*, but only in experience, and have no existence outside it. (A492/B520-1)

Now that phrase ‘existence outside it’ makes it sound like actual experience, but now notice what he goes on to say.

That there may be inhabitants in the moon, although no one has ever perceived them, must certainly be admitted. This, however, only means that in the possible advance of experience we may encounter them. For everything is real which stands in connection with a perception in accordance with the laws of empirical advance. They are therefore real if they stand in an empirical connection with my actual consciousness, although they are not for that reason real in themselves, that is, outside this *advance of experience*. [emphasis, ws] (A493/B521)

And then,

Nothing is really given us save perception and the empirical advance from *this* to other *possible perceptions*. [emphasis, ws]

Now that is the passage upon which I have been commenting, “possible perception”.

To call an appearance a real thing prior to our perceiving it, either means that in the advance of experience we must meet with such a perception, or it means nothing at all. (A493/B521)

Kant should have said an awful lot more, but you get the hint, at least, that in addition to what we actually represent, there are available representations. Not logically possible: ‘possible’ doesn’t mean here “logically possible”; it means what I call ‘available perceptions’.

10. I may cease to exist, but in some sense we can say that it is objectively true that if I had continued to exist or had not moved out of the room, I would have perceived the chair. So the content of the world, even construed in perceptual terms, consists not merely of what we actually perceive but also what is perceivable. Perceptions here are not sense data; they are intuitions really, perceptual intuitions. I mean, we aren’t saying the world consists of actual and obtainable sense data or something like that.

11. Obtainable empirical intuitions are not merely logically possible ones because “logically possible ones” is a very permissive notion. They have to be something that are somehow privileged. They are ones that are in some sense actual even though they are not actually intuited. They are available “intuiteds”. And, as I said, it is this domain of available intuitables which in Kant’s system corresponds to the independently real spatio-

temporal order of transcendental realism.<sup>3</sup>

### *C. Transcendental object, the in itself, and categories*

#### 12. What is a transcendental object?

Well, of course, "transcendental object" plays two roles in Kant's system. In the first place, it is really a thing in itself construed as the ground—cause, in a very abstract sense—of our perceptual intuitions.

13. Also, when we conceive of a thing in itself, we conceive of it in terms of the pure categories and he thinks of the pure categories as providing us with the concept of an object in general, one which really would be the same for beings with different forms of intuition. And so he thinks that our experience is an experience of objects. Our experience, therefore, involves the concept of an object in general and in that sense you might say there is something in our experience, as we conceive it, which is actualized by things in themselves.

14. However, Kant then goes on to emphasize (this becomes very clear in the second edition) that what we conceive of objects as being is not simply a matter of the categories, but of the schematized categories. Furthermore, in the second edition, although there is no change of doctrine, there is the problem of individuation. When you talk about a thing in itself, you know, you think of it as being an individuated thing. But, as Kant came to reflect on the notion of a thing in itself, it occurred to him that perceptual experience doesn't really give us a way of individuating the in itself in any genuine way and therefore he doesn't like to speak of things in themselves or a thing in itself. It just becomes the in itself and therefore he no longer finds it illuminating. I mean, we still have to think of the in itself in terms of the pure categories, in terms of that which has attributes, that which grounds states of affairs, and so on. Although we have to think of the thing in itself in terms of the pure categories, it is misleading, he thinks, to say that things in themselves are objects.

<sup>3</sup> Sellars frequently pointed out that Kant thinks that there is some "stuff" (substance) which persists and is shaped by individuals (like matter being shaped). "Physical world" is like "quantity of silver;" it persists but is now a piece of coin, etc. The stuff in the mind is true qua representable because it corresponds to a privileged system of intersubjective possible representables. It isn't in itself; he replaces this by an intersubjective domain of items that are a privileged system of representables. It is a system of constructables, i.e., things which are to be represented by the constructive activity of minds. The privileged system is the correct "program" and, when we have it, we can "sniff the in itself as best we can," Sellars would say. (He would point out A127 as a good passage to reflect upon nature and matter).

15. That is why Kant starts out by explaining to non-Kantians by talking about things in themselves as though there is some way of individuating them and as though what we know is how things in themselves appear to us: they appear to us as spatial and temporal. The only way that we can really individuate is in terms of space and time, but the *in itself* is non-spatial and non-temporal. He drops that way of talking and the notion of an object gets detached from the notion of a transcendental object.

16. When he says that the categories do not apply to the *in itself*, you have to understand that the problem lies in the word 'apply'. He never abandons the view that we think of things in themselves in terms of categories. He cannot abandon that. But, when he uses the word 'apply', he means 'apply' in the rich sense of getting knowledge by means of applying. And 'apply' in another sense—well, you see, the categories can be applied to things in themselves. We know that there is the *in itself* and as a matter of fact we know that the *in itself* has many facets. We discussed this at the very beginning. There is a multiplicity in it, but we cannot say that the *in itself* is a Spinozistic single thing of which the plurality are aspects, nor can we say that it is a Leibnizian system of monads which are ultimate individuals. He does think of the *in itself* as variegated. That is perfectly clear. But we cannot, in any interesting metaphysical sense, pin down physically the status of this variegation. All we can do is to say that there must be a variegation in the *in itself* which somehow corresponds to the variegation in our experience.

17. We have to distinguish between the pure-pure category, the pure category and the schematized category. The pure-pure category of cause is just the relation of consequence, you see, and that also holds in mathematics and logic: it is the consequence relationship. Then you have the pure category which concerns the consequence relationship specialized to concrete states of affairs, but not as necessarily temporal and spatial. The pure category of causality is, as opposed to just consequence, the notion of the consequence relation specialized to concrete states of affairs without committing yourself to the view that they are spatial or temporal. That would be common to all experiences of concrete objects whether they are experienced in terms of space and time or not. Causality proper is a schematized category, which is really what Kant is concerned with. That is the notion of the consequence relationship involving concrete events in time.

## D. "I think" and the categories

18. Question: What does Kant mean at A341/B399?

Well, Kant says,

This is the concept or, if the terms be preferred, the judgment, 'I think.' As is easily seen, this is the vehicle of all concepts, and therefore also of transcendental concepts, and so is always included in the conceiving of these latter, and is itself transcendental.

What does he mean? This is a very important passage actually. It is easy to give this a ridiculous interpretation according to which every judgment has the form 'I think': like 'I think that it is raining', 'I think the chair is brown' and so on. When he says that 'I think' is the vehicle of all judgments, he doesn't mean that every judgment is of the form 'I think thus and so'.

19. What he is telling us is that categories and concepts, all are features of acts of thought. Here (Figure 2) is an act of thought (at T<sub>1</sub>).

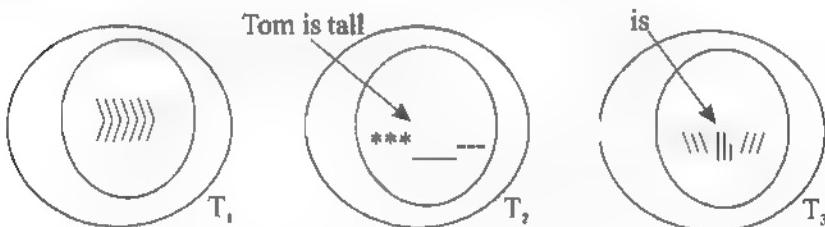


Figure 2

So, if one judges "Tom is tall," for example (T<sub>2</sub>), then "Tom is tall" is a feature of an act of thought which can be itself characterized as a manner of 'I think'. In other words, it is just another way of saying that the categories are forms of thought, and that concepts are, not in any exactly similar sense, forms of thought, but they are specifications of forms of thought. For example, the judgment 'Tom is tall' has the form '----- is \_\_\_\_'. It is an act of thought which has a certain structure and it is fleshed in by 'Tom' and 'tall'. He is telling us that conceptual items exist only in the domain of thought. They exist only in acts of thought and the categories exist only as features of the acts of thought. I discuss this in some detail in "Some Remarks on Kant's Theory of Experience".<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>KTE (67) in KTM (118); see also TTC (77) in KTM (118).

20. He is telling us, roughly, that the categories are not, as the Aristotelians thought, *summa genera* pertaining to realities existing independent of mind. The categories are *summa genera* with respect to acts of thought.<sup>5</sup> Thus when we think of what we mean by a category, we find that it is a formal feature of acts of thought. Thus, the category of substance is really the concept of the subject of a judgment. Putting it in sort of crude contemporary terms, Kant holds that categories are syntactical and that we talk about them in the material mode of speech. The Aristotelian took talk about substances having attributes—which is, according to Kant-Carnap, the material mode of speech—to be literal empirical statements.

21. Now, in a note Kant says,

The 'I think' is, as already stated, an empirical proposition, and contains within itself the proposition 'I exist'. (note, B422)

It contains in it the pure category of existence, not the schematized category. The distinction between pure categories and schematized categories is essential to the *Paralogisms*. Of course, when Kant talks about the categories, he is usually talking about the schematized categories. The 'I think' here is not schematized.

22. When he says the 'I think' expresses an indeterminate empirical intuition, by 'indeterminate' he means merely "unspecified". Thus, 'I think' always has to be 'I think something'. There is no such thing as an act of thought which is not of something, but when I say 'I think', we just leave it open as to what the intentional object is, that is, what the thought is of. If I refer to an 'I think', I am not specifying what the thought is about. This use of the word 'indeterminate' to mean unspecified goes way back to the beginning of the *Analytic* where Kant says that the indeterminate object of an intuition "I call an appearance." By 'indeterminate' he means here unspecified ('appearance' is a generic word for objects of intuition). So again 'indeterminate' here doesn't have any exciting meaning. It just means that when you are referring to something as an "I think," a *cogitatio*, the reference is indeterminate because you are not specifying what the *cogitatio* is a *cogitatio* of. So, there is nothing puzzling about that. Kant is saying that when you are referring to a *cogitatio*, you are referring to my act of thought,

<sup>5</sup> The difference between the Aristotelian and Kantian tradition goes back to Plato who, in *The Sophist* (255C), treats the categories as *summa genera* of "things said" rather than, as Aristotle has it, things that are: " τῶν δύντων τὰ μὲν αὐτὰ καθ' αὐτά, τὰ δὲ πρὸς ἄλλα οἷς λέγεσθαι" The Platonic tradition embraces the view that categories pertain to "thoughts" as the original "things said" evolve into thoughts.

but you aren't characterizing what the thought is of though it must be of something.

23. So, Kant says, insofar as it is merely referred to as a *cogitatio*, you already grant that the *I* exists, but you are not giving any determinate account of the *I*. That only comes in when you specify what the *I* is thinking of, whether it is in perceiving or philosophizing or moralizing, you see. All the word '*I*' means is the thinker of this thought. We don't know what the *I* is except that it is a thinker, a representer as I put it. The *I* is, roughly, that which represents. When we think of a *cogitatio* and simply are aware of it, we are aware of it as a thinker thinking, but we are not specifying what it is that it is thinking of even though every thought has to have a content (or a specification).

24. The categories are concepts of ways of thinking. The concept of thought is a transcendental concept. What is empirical is the judgment '*I think*'. What is transcendental is the concept of thought, the concept of the '*I think*'. The concept of a thought is involved in the very concept of the categories: that is just the point. That is, as I was saying, the point where he differs from the Aristotelian tradition. Kant says you cannot really understand what a category is unless you see it as a form of thought and, therefore, as a form of an act of thought which we can also refer to as a *cogitatio* or as an "*I think*".

#### *E. Double affection: appearance*

25. Amaral: In *Kant's Transcendental Idealism*, you say that the doctrine of the double affection peeks out from any page. Could you provide some diagrams to locate us in the correct conceptual space for appreciating that comment?

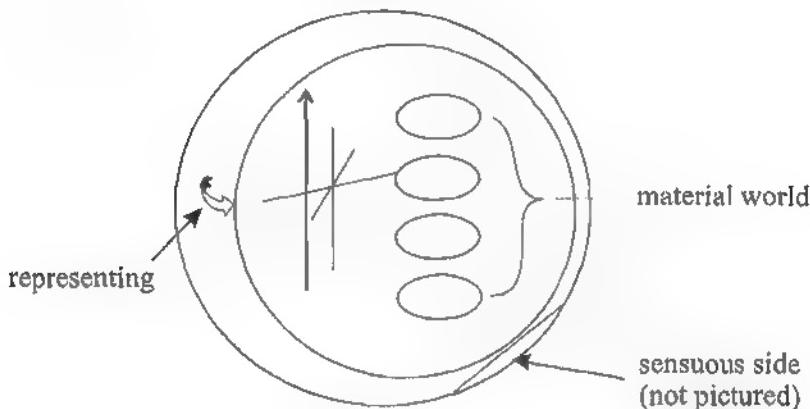
Yeah, I'll draw you a nice picture: here is a certain stage in representing the spatiotemporal world (Figure 3). I'll use lines to represent time and space.



Figure 3

This is the world as represented. I am abstracting from truth and falsity. This is, then, the structure of the world as represented. I am just looking at the structure of the world as represented. So here is a representing of the world, that is, at a certain stage in the evolution of one's experience.

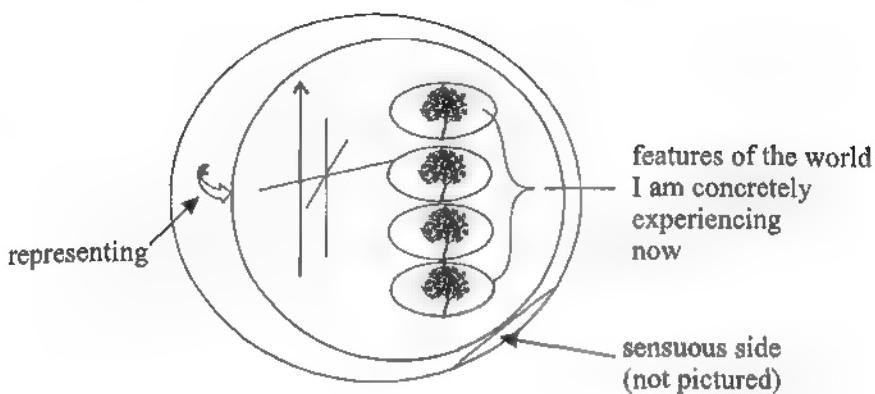
26. We would say, here is the "now" in that evolution. The crucial thing is that there is a contrast between the empirical self and, you might say, physical slices of the material world. So here is, roughly, the material world (Figure 4), that is, as we *represent it*.



**Figure 4**

And, of course, we represent it more or less *determinately*. You know that there are some features of it that I am representing now very determinately. You look around here in the room—very determinate. Then, I represent the Cathedral, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania—you know how you used to do in high school—the world, the universe. You see there is always this big background.

27. Here are those features of the world that one is concretely experiencing now (Figure 5), again, perhaps illusory or not. We are not concerned now with that.



**Figure 5**

28. But then here (Figure 6) is the empirical self.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Figure 6 introduces the representing of the transcendental self—the key to understanding Sellars' interpretation of judgment (and double affection). Pictorially, we have a contrast between the "I" as the empirical self and the "I" as the transcendental self. The diagrams capture Kant's interpretation of experience in the second edition *Refutation of Idealism* where, Sellars remarks, "we respond to the impressions of sense by conceptually representing a temporal me embedded in a spatio-temporal nature. the determinate core of this representing consists of intuitive ..representings of both representings (states of the empirical self [on the left]) and non-representings (states of material things [on the right])." (*SM*, ch. II, ¶42.) By contrast, in the first edition, according to Sellars, Kant construes spatial objects not as represented (on the right) but as being 'in' the representings belonging to the history of the empirical self (on the left). (*SM*, ch. II, ¶41.) The heart of transcendental idealism is "the thesis that the core of the knowable self is the self as perceiver of material things and events." (*KTI*, ¶52) The doctrine of double affection, we see here, is an essential feature of Kant's thought (*SM*, ch. II, ¶57): "It simply tells us that the transcendently conceived non-spatial, non-temporal action of the non-ego on human receptivity, generating the manifold of sense, has as its counterpart in the represented world the action of material things on our sense organs, and through them, on the sensory faculties of the empirical self." The empirical self—the I which we experience as thinking in time—is an aspect of a perceptible body (*I*, ¶30).

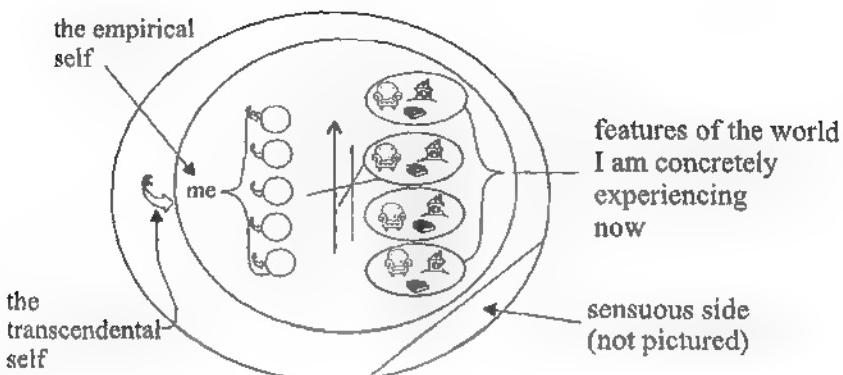


Figure 6

29. When we experience states of the empirical self and we are particularly concerned here with the *perceptual* states of the empirical self, we think of them as caused. What I am doing is spelling out what I was saying last time. We think of our perceptions in the sense of *perceptual* states as being brought about by the material world of which our body is a part. Here (Figure 7) is my body.

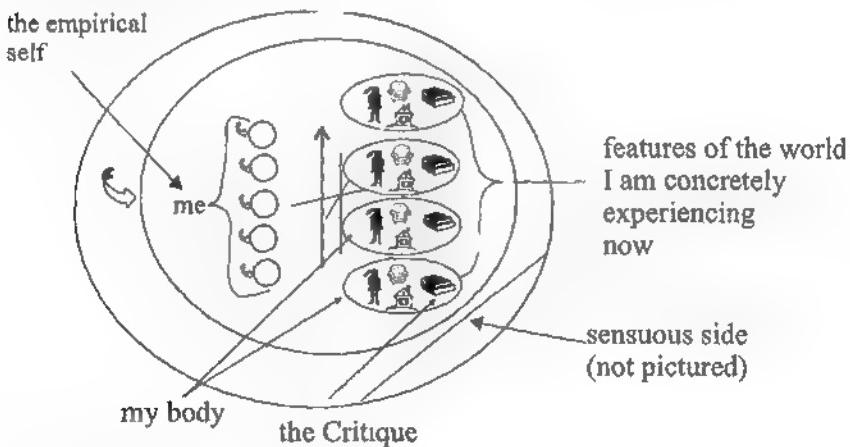


Figure 7

You see, here is my body and here is a book and I am looking at a book. Why do I have these perceptual states? Because I am confronted by a book, a tough book, and it is having an impact on me. So here is the sense in

which one's perceptual states are, in the phenomenal world, caused by material things acting on my eye generating the buzzings in the brain and generating perceptual states.<sup>7</sup> That is what we are going to call the empirical level of affection (Figure 8).

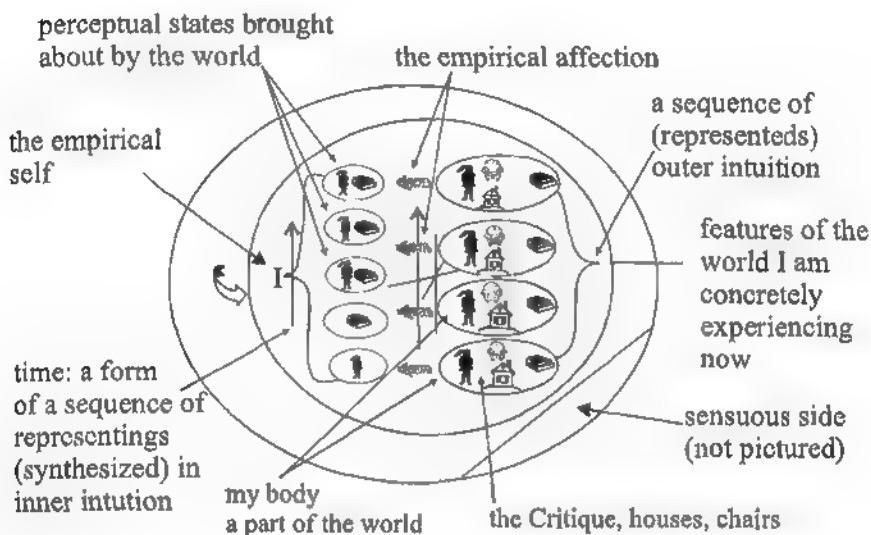
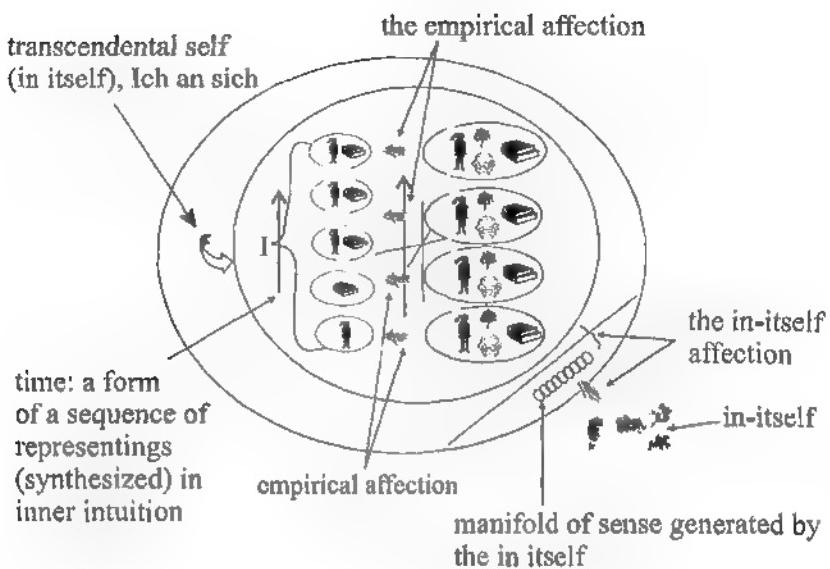


Figure 8

#### *F. Double affection: the in itself*

30. Of course, all this structure has been inspired, as it were, by the presence of the manifold of sense that is generated by the *in itself*. And there (Figure 9) we have, in the pure-pure category sense, the *in itself* as the *cause* of the manifold of sense. And that we can call the other level in which there is an affection of the *in itself* in experience.

<sup>7</sup>"Kant saw that the concept of an object of perception contains a reference to the perceptual takings which are the criteria for its actuality," Sellars remarks (*KTE*, §53). The idea of an object of a perceptual taking contains a reference to the things and events that imply its own actuality, and the concept of truth concerns the agreement of what we represent with the actual. Thus, from the transcendental point of view, the non-perspectival physical object and event (on the right) are contrasted perspectival perceptual states (see, *IKE* for a discussion of this point). It is to see ourselves in a world surrounded by material things and events, temporally related to other events as belonging to the causal order. While, from the transcendental perspective, we see that an actual state of affairs is the true species of judging that "constitutes" our empirical world (*KTE*, §26).



**Figure 9**

31. This is an “in itself” kind of affection. I mean, this is what is *really* going on: namely,

a non-spatial, non-temporal in itself is non-spatially and non-temporally impinging on my faculty of sensibility which is itself non-spatial and non-temporal and is generating in it a manifold to which I am responding by constructing a spatial and temporal world.

This is what is meant by the doctrine of double affection.<sup>8</sup> Here (Figure 10) is the, as it were, *in itself* action.<sup>9</sup>

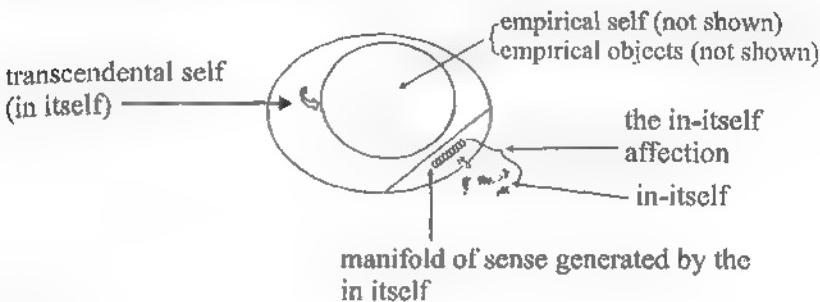
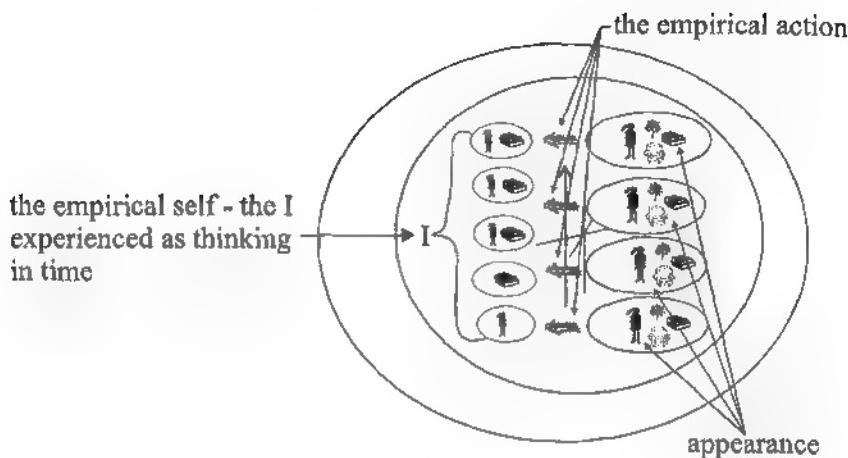


Figure 10

32. And here (Figure 11) is the empirical action.

<sup>8</sup>In §8 (B59-66) and §24 (B150-157) where double affection stands out, Sellars' marginalia at B154 notes "[w]e must separate the  $\tau$ -dimension of sensory states and the  $\tau$ -dimension of conceptual representings." If figure 9 included a sequence of successive representings of the self *in itself* (left side) and these were drawn on a vertical arrow just as the states of the empirical self are drawn on an arrow, the successiveness depicted would not be temporal (see *SM*, ch. II, ¶69 and *I*, ¶56). Such a successiveness, as characterizing the agency and activity of the noumenal self, would belong to a transcendental synthesis according to the pure categories. If drawn as described, the transcendental synthesis would stand side by side with the empirical synthesis (the one already drawn) and empirical objects. The non-passive awareness of the spontaneity in synthesizing empirical objects would involve pure apperception of the self *in itself* as it affects itself but not as subject which affects itself. (see *Opus postumum*, 22:461-22 466, 22:78, tr. E. Förster and M. Rosen (Cambridge, 1993).

<sup>9</sup>As Sellars often points out (for example, *SM*, ch. II, ¶41ff; Appendix, ¶18), he finds three kinds of successiveness in the *Critique*: that of the epistemic acts of the real self (the transcendental self *in itself*), that of impressions in the  $\sigma$ - and  $\tau$ -dimension, and that belonging to the representings of the empirical self and material objects (phenomenal time). In addition, he finds two forms of passivity that which allows each "affection" to take place. The self is passive with respect to the representations of outer sense. An analogous passivity is involved in the mind's responses to its own states (inner sense). "The noumenal state of thinking that S is P causes one to represent that one is thinking that S is P. The mind, by being in a certain state, "affects" itself." (*I*, ¶43) Inner sense includes the consciousness of our own mind as a conceptual response (although Sellars argues that pure apperception gives us a non-passive awareness of the mind as active (*I*, 56ff); so it is, not inappropriately, thought of as inner sense too but let's leave this aside). Though it is largely ignored in contemporary literature, without inner sense (in both forms, it seems), given what we have seen so far, there is no world. For Sellars, there is no apprehending independent of a conceptual framework, it is wrong, as Kant shows us, to think that first we experience and then we get the concepts.



**Figure 11**

33. The one could be the *appearance* of the other. In other words,  
this sort of relationship between material things in space and time  
and my empirical self

is

the way in which, to my mind with its faculties, this kind of action,  
the action of the in itself on my faculty of sensibility, appears.

So, as I would like to put it, the *empirical* action of material things, on our body and on our mind, is the appearance of a real in itself relationship of impingement by the in itself on my faculty of sensibility.<sup>10</sup>

34. As I said in "Some Remarks on Kant's Theory of Experience," Kant is in a position to grant that empirical knowledge involves a uniformity of conceptual response to extra conceptual items and even to grant that extra conceptual items conform to general laws, without granting that the character of the items to which we conceptually respond, or the laws to

<sup>10</sup> Sellars remarks, "What the *Aesthetic* does is to establish the noninferential character of our consciousness of spatial objects. What the *Principles* do is to establish that the objects do have the kind of structure which entitles us to call them a physical world."

which God knows them to conform, are accessible to finite minds.<sup>11</sup>

35. This idea is implicit in the transcendental principle of the affinity of the manifold of sense and finds its explicit formulation in B164 where Kant, in a little noted passage, wrote that

Things in themselves would necessarily [that is, as a necessary truth of transcendental logic, *ws*] apart from any understanding that knows them, conform to laws of their own.

We are led to think of the Newtonian framework of the world as we experience it as a projection of a system of laws to which things in themselves conform and which are known only to God. Does that answer your question?

Amaral: Yes.

<sup>11</sup> We have finally reached the point at which it becomes clear that, from the transcendental point of view (i.e., to the transcendental self), objective necessity (or, in other terms, the actual or privileged representables) is put in terms of the way in which appearances necessarily belong together since appearances are constituted by their being thought (they exist only in thinking), then their necessary connection is their conformity to the forms of judgment in which they are realized through the unity of consciousness (cf. A108). Sellars makes it clear why, at A191/B236, Kant says that the appearance is "nothing but the sum of these representations": as noted earlier, the subjective and objective succession are, in a sense, the same thing (for actual objects). However, Sellars also comments on the difficulty Kant had with sense impressions like color. Kant tended to identify them with the intensive magnitudes (A169/B210). As a result, Sellars would sometimes include sense impressions on the left, in the representations of the empirical self.



## Descartes

### A. The Platonic tradition

#### (α) Introduction

1. Today, I want to take a long walk around the subject of the eighteenth century and particularly look at it in terms of preceding developments, concentrating, as you would expect, on a key notion of this period, that of an idea.

2. Most important is the Platonic tradition. Descartes is clearly in the Platonic tradition. It is easy to draw a neat contrast between the Platonic tradition and the Aristotelian tradition, just as it is easy to draw a distinction between the Empiricists and the Rationalists. Therefore, I will characterize some features of the Platonic tradition as they relate to the thought of Descartes. Descartes comes out of Plato, as it were, via St. Augustine and the Augustinian tradition and some tendencies of high scholastic thought. Descartes' thought is by no means the abrupt break with scholastic thought that it is easy to assume.

3. I take it that you are familiar with sort of thing that Plato is talking about when he talks about the "Ideas" or "Forms". The ideas or forms are not in any sense dependent upon mind. They are a domain of entities (in a broad sense, "objects") having a rather complicated structure which Plato became more and more sensitive to as he developed his views.

4. For Plato, in addition to minds, there is the domain of forms or ideas, and, as I said, they are independently real. Putting it in a kind of metaphysical counterfactual, there are forms even if there are no minds in the world. To start with, there are many, many forms and Plato doesn't tell us very much about the relations which exist between them or the kind of system they form. Later on he makes it quite clear that he is very concerned with this, first in the *Republic* and then in the *Sophist*. However, by the time we get to the *Parmenides*, the realm of ideas becomes baffling, very problematic.

5. I want to deal with some very elementary considerations. I take as a paradigm of an idea, the triangle itself: the such-and-such itself. We can call this triangularity, for our purposes, without losing any precision. Actually there is a family of forms here, for there are different species of triangularity. Triangularity, of course, belongs to a larger family of various generic forms or shapes.

6. In the first place there is no reason whatever to believe that triangularity is a Beau Brummel triangle. I shall assume Plato doesn't; nobody else after Plato did. There is no temptation to do it except if your word for it, 'the triangle itself', makes it look as though triangularity had to be a triangle. But of course Plato did not inherit a nice terminology for his theory. He was at the beginning and had to develop his own terminology. As I said, there is no pressure in Plato's system for the view that triangularity is a triangle, that equilateral triangularity is an equilateral

triangle. I will assume that it isn't. The idea that it is doesn't play a role in subsequent developments, though we may find some were puzzled about this when we come to deal with the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In order to get a frame of reference, we shall identify the triangle itself with triangularity, much as metaphysically inclined philosophers of logic do today.

### (B) The Forms and causality: recollection, sensation, and perception

7. Consider equilateral triangularity. It is, in an appropriate sense, something to be seen or grasped or comprehended by the mind; so, in some sense, it is an object of mind. The mind is concerned with it. The mind already, for Plato, has two aspects. It has an aspect which is turned toward changing things, operating through sense perception, and it has an aspect which is turned toward the forms. (For other purposes, Plato divides the mind or soul into three parts.) We get this contrast: the aspect oriented to the body or the physical world or perceptions and the aspect concerned with the forms.

8. Plato develops—in a kind of story, a kind of prototheory—a theory of how the mind comes to be able to deal with the forms, to have these forms as objects to be concerned with. This, of course, is the doctrine of recollection which, as it were, clothes a kind of prototheory. Plato, I think, is committed to it as a sheer piece of philosophical analysis. It is also part of a whole religious conception of man's place in the universe and we have to look at it in that light as well. From our point of view, it is a kind of prototheory of how the mind comes to be able to cope with the forms as its objects.

9. Plato thinks there is an appropriate analogy between the kind of vision we have of the forms and the kind of vision we have in sense perception. The analogy is an important one because Plato thinks of sense perception as involving a causal relation between the object of perception and the mind. We have, in vision, this visual ray, and an interaction between the objects and the ray. As a result of this causal process, we have a perception of the tree.

10. It is useful here to talk about sensation because we will be talking later of that fusion of sensation and conception which is involved in perception. There occurs in a perception, a tree, but what is immediately generated is a visual sensation which is at least a constituent of the perception of the tree. So we have, then, a causal process culminating in the perception, perception being a kind of unity of sensation and thought. We can say the causal process culminates in the perception, one aspect of which being the sensation and that is the aspect with which we are most interested.

11. In the case of the seeing of a tree, there is a sensation that can linger on in memory. Being caused to have a certain perceptual experience lingers on as an ability—you might say—an ability to remember; or, to draw a distinction between the perception and the sensation involved, we might say an ability to have an image. In other words, putting it very crudely, sensations linger on as images. Using the

phrase "memory image" in a kind of careless way, we might say then, having had the sensation, we subsequently have images. We have the ability to have images which are, in a way, the likenesses of the sensation. This is a theory—sketchy—of anything which we call memory.

12. Plato put forth the beginnings of an associative psychology here. The image can be aroused by another experience which is like it or is unlike it; it can be aroused by an experience of something, say, a bush, which was next to the tree when you saw the tree. So, you have this image of a tree; the ability to have this image was generated by the previous experience and that ability can be actualized, that capacity to have the image can be actualized, as Plato puts it, by something which is like it or something which is unlike it. The fact that it can plays a role in his doctrine of recollection.

13. The key thing to appreciate for understanding later developments is that, according to Plato, just as the object of perception plays a causal role in perception so, in intellectual life, an object of intellection plays a causal role. In other words, putting it crudely, triangularity is the cause of our ability to represent triangularity. Triangularity is the cause of our ability to represent triangularity just as the tree is the cause of our perception of a tree. Thus, triangularity is the cause of a perception that is to be regarded as an intellectual perception and construed as a state of the soul. The intellectual perception is a state of soul just as perception is a state of the soul.

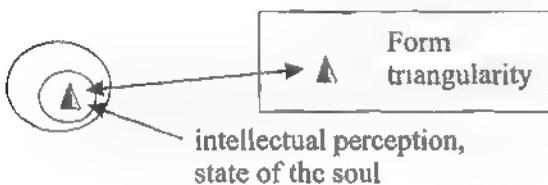
#### (γ) Representationalism

14. "Direct Realism" of perception is a view according to which the mind gets at the external object itself. There may be causal action involved from the object to the person, but there is ultimately a direct apprehension of the object itself. It's a view which involves many puzzles, but it is a view which has a respectable status and respectable lineage. So whatever else are found as states of a person, there is some direct relation of apprehension of, or perhaps "being of", the independent object itself. The corresponding view in the case of the forms, supposing there be such objects, is that apart from any causal influences which might be involved, the perception of triangularity is direct, a direct relation of the mind to triangularity: a seeing of it in a direct sense which is not representative.

15. Now Plato does not hold a view of this kind at all. It wasn't until the ingenious philosophers in the early twentieth century got disturbed about the puzzles of representative theories of thinking and perception that they worked out ways of defending the view that the mind is in direct relation to its objects, the independently real objects themselves. But that is a very modern view and it should not be read back into the history of philosophy. You might say, almost without exception, philosophers held a representative view of perception, intellectual and sensuous.

16. We must avoid G.E. Moore's kind of theory (which you have in *Some Main Problems of Philosophy*) in which there are forms, the "intelligibilia," and the

mind can directly apprehend them. Rather, Plato holds a representative theory: there is a state of the soul which is representative of triangularity and which is caused. With this is the view that this intellectual perception occurred before one's life. Metaphorically speaking, our soul is encrusted with a kind of mud; it has gotten dirty as it were, it has a nostalgia, it is held down, it is dragged down, it is chained to this veil of tears. The forms are there but they can't break through to impinge on the soul. Still, there was a time when it was not encrusted with mud and the forms could make their presence felt. Thus, there could be this action of the forms.



**Figure 1**

17. It's a very interesting kind of causality here, the notion of something which does not change the forms. The forms clearly do not change; they are not active; they themselves do not exemplify events, processes, or so on. And yet they are responsible for it: it's a very abstract theory of causality.<sup>1</sup> According to Plato, just as in perception there is the sun which provides the light which cooperates with the visual ray and makes possible sense perception, so the form of the Good (which is the analog in the realm of the forms to the sun) plays a similar role in making it possible for the mind to perceive triangularity, i.e., represent it.<sup>2</sup>

18. I want to emphasize again that the state of the soul represents triangularity and that after the soul has been encrusted by the body, so to speak, the effect can no longer take place. Just as perception generates the ability to have images so, according to Plato, the intellectual perception of triangularity generates the ability to have intellectual images of the form triangle itself.

19. We can use the word 'concept' to mean *an ability to "think of"*, for example, of a triangle. We can think of this concept as the ability to think of a triangle, or to think of the character of being triangular, or to think of triangularity. Again, we are not pausing here to explore what differences there might be between thinking of triangularity and thinking of a triangle (although Leibniz was very sensitive about this point and has some important things to say). But for our purposes, we will say that the *concept* of triangularity is an ability to think of a triangle (or triangularity) and that is compared to the ability to have an intellectual image of a triangle corresponding to the perception one had: a perception which

<sup>1</sup>This form of causality is an ancestor of the Scholastics' notion of divine causality

<sup>2</sup>Sellars pursues this theme in "The Soul as Craftsman" in *PPHP* (101).

was generated by the triangle itself. And this ability to represent triangularity can be brought into play either by something like it or something unlike it; as in visual perception.

20. The reason Plato brings that in is very simple and obvious: namely, when we see something like this on the blackboard,



Figure 2

it's a messy thing, and it's only by courtesy we call it a triangle. Metaphorically, it is something that is striving to be a triangle, an equilateral triangle, but it falls short. What Plato wants to say is that when you look at this, you recognize it as a triangle, even though it isn't really a triangle. And therefore your recognition process is mobilized by something that is unlike a triangle (and like it too). So, the concept of a triangle is an ability to represent what it is to be a triangle and that ability is called into play by perceptions, by perceptions which are inferior: the ability to represent ideal triangularity is called into play by sense perception.

21. To sum up, this is a representative theory and a theory according to which the ability to think about reality is caused by reality itself. Putting it crudely, reality is responsible for our being able to think of reality. It is a causal theory of concept formation.

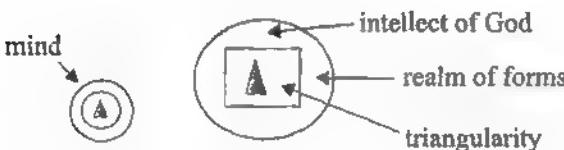
#### *B. The divine mind*

22. Descartes held a causal theory of concept formation. Plato stands alone in the history of philosophy for holding that the forms are independent of mind. As soon as Plato shuffled off this stage, a different theory which is closely akin to this, but radically different in one respect, took over. That is the theory according to which the forms exist in the mind of God. This is the view which dominates the Platonic tradition. In Plato, the form of the Good is not in a mind. There are gods and there are minds, but that's it. For Plato, God himself just represents the forms; even God's thinking is representative.

23. One of the key roles that the Platonic forms play is being accessible to many minds. The forms, as it were, stand in relationship to "many," to manifolds. The forms are represented by many minds and furthermore they are imitated by many concrete objects in the world. There is a manifold of instances of the form and there is a manifold of minds which represent the form. So, there are two ways in which triangularity gets "embodied" in the world. On the one hand, through

triangles and, on the other hand, through minds representing.

24. Now what happens to the realm of ideas is that it becomes the intellect of God. That is not a simple notion, for it involves many complexities as we will see later on in Descartes. Let us start out by putting the realm of forms in the mind of God, including our friend triangularity:



**Figure 3**

There are many important issues which arise, and many distinctions drawn which we will have to pay attention to. But for the moment, let's just say that here is triangularity as something which is *in* the intellect of God, in God's understanding.

25. I might mention here one problem which is lurking around the corner: viz., what is the relation of the forms to God? How is their presence in God to be understood? I will make this question more precise later on, but it was a key question, a very important question for Descartes, as it had been for scholastic theologians.

26. All I need to call attention to now is that, instead of triangularity being the cause of our ability to think of triangularity, it is God which is the cause. This view is very clearly in Augustine: it is the doctrine of illumination, the illumination of the human mind by God.

27. Before, in Plato, it was the illumination of minds by the forms themselves. Now it is the illumination of the mind by God. You can see how metaphysicians were a little more comfortable with this: even Plato was worried about how a form could act on a mind. But God is the source of immanence as we all know. So, one felt more comfortable about saying that God is the cause; after all, God is a person and if anything is to be a cause, it's persons. So, God is the cause of our ability to think (to have a concept) of triangularity.

### C. Concept Empiricism

28. What is the competing type of theory? I've been giving the stage completely over to Plato. Now, what is the competing approach to concept formation? First, there is what we call "Concept Empiricism": that somehow our concepts are derived from sense experience. The view again being that we have the idea of triangularity because we have had a perception of a triangle and then somehow this generates the ability to think of triangularity.

29. Plato considers this possibility and rejects it. Why does Plato reject it? His objection is a familiar one: viz., triangles, such as perception presents us with, aren't

triangles. The lines perception presents us with are not really lines in the mathematician's sense. What the intellect deals with, the intellectual concept of a triangle or a straight line, is the sort of thing a mathematician deals with. All the so-called lines that we see have breadth and they don't present themselves in a clear cut way as being perfectly straight, and on. In sense perception, we don't see something as being perfectly straight simply by sense. Plato argues it's because we really have the concept of perfect straightness that we can classify a perceived item (by courtesy) as a straight line.

30. The empiricist alternative was already lurking here: nothing is in the intellect which is not first in the senses. But Plato gave a very standard argument which, by and large, held the stage except for the Aristotleans who made some valiant efforts to defend an empiricist account. Actually they were ingenious and we will look at that some time later.

#### *D. Concepts and acts; form and content*

31. God, then, is the cause of the various intelligibles that we think of and this involves the doctrine of innate concepts. Now let's start taking a look at the word 'idea' and try to relate that to what we already have here.

32. Notice that the concept of triangularity characterized as an ability is an ability to have certain mental acts. Here's (Figure 4) the concept of triangularity. I am representing it by a circle, simply because I represent all concepts by circles. I will put something in these circles shortly.

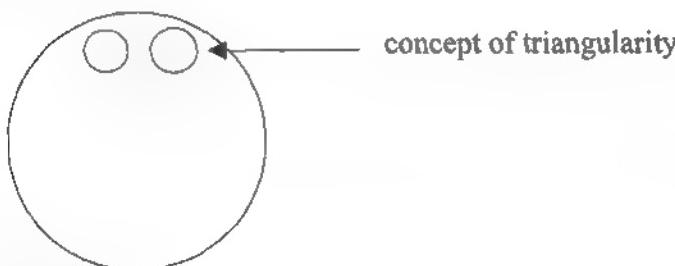


Figure 4

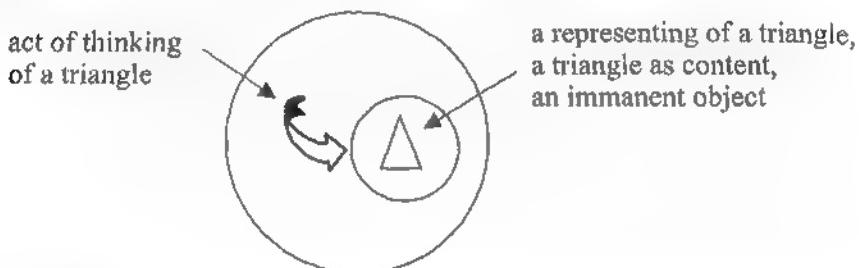
The concept of 'triangularity' is the ability to be in a certain mental state, a "mental act". The word 'act' does not mean action or a piece of conduct; it means actuality, the actual state. The actuality is a mental act of representing.

33. Representing what? The concept of triangularity, what is that the ability to represent? Representing a triangle? Or representing triangularity? There are dangers there, but let's just say representing a triangle, a mental act of representing a triangle, as it were, intellectually.

34. Now Plato himself did not develop a theory of representation. It is taken as a kind of unanalyzed notion and that's perfectly legitimate. But no philosophical

theme could go through the middle ages without being broken up into all kinds of distinctions. So instead of taking the notion of intellectually representing something as a kind of basic notion, it was given an apparently well articulated theoretical analysis by the time of high scholasticism. We are talking about the mental act of representing a triangle and that is to be contrasted with sense perception. We are not dealing with sense perception here; we are dealing with representing of a triangle as a pure mathematician is.

35. Here (Figure 5) is a mental act in the Aristotelian sense of *ἐνέπνεια*, or actuality. It is that which represents a triangle; it is a thinking of a triangle.

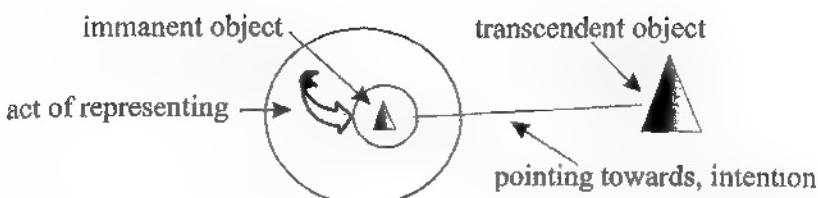


**Figure 5**

That word 'of' has been the cause of as much good/bad philosophy as 'not' or 'and'. It's not a matter of directly grasping triangularity itself (although we'll look at Malbranche and his notion of seeing all things in God). I draw a picture here but, remember, for most philosophers this is not supposed to be an image of a triangle or a sensation of a triangle: it's a representing of a triangle.

36. The only reason I draw a triangle is to emphasize that there is, operating here, a kind of prototheory of representation which appeals to analogies between intellect and sense, analogies we found back in Plato. It is something like having an image of a triangle, but it's not having an image of a triangle. Descartes wants to put it in almost those words, when he speaks of ideas as "as it were images". He's very clear that they are not, but he's giving us, in the classical way, the analogy of perception. Thus, it's an act which is directed upon the triangle, directed upon what it is to be a triangle, directed upon triangularity (there are all kinds of ways of putting it which can be suddenly different.) The important thing is that it has a certain content; it has what later philosophers call an "immanent object." It's not directly a grasping of triangularity itself, but it is "of" something—what the act is concerned with, what the act intends, what it points toward.

37. In a sense, it points towards this:



**Figure 6**

This is its transcendent object. It is the reality independent of my mind which the representing represents by virtue of having a certain content in itself. (The metaphor of "containing" and "content" and "in" is to be taken very seriously and concerns the analysis of immanence and representing) Here is a representing and that representing has a certain content and that content thus formed corresponds to the reality which is in nature.

38. The act of representing not only has content, it also has a form. Everything that is an actuality must be of a certain sort, kind or nature. So, this act of representing has a form or a species. If there's a dog over there, Fido, well, Fido has a certain form, dogkind. Here is an act of representing. It has to be of a certain kind. And what kind is it? Well, we'll explore this question.

39. We are dealing right now with very simple acts of representing as opposed to judgings or reasonings, etc. But suppose somebody is setting up a topic for reflection: "triangle", what is a triangle? He is representing a triangle and hasn't yet gotten around to making any judgments. In the first place, we say a thinking is an act of representing, but it has to have a specific form. Fido there isn't just an animal. He's a dog; perhaps he's a Daschund, a short-haired Daschund. You've got to get down to the bottom of the hierarchy of genus-species before you capture the essence of Fido. The scholastics held then that the act of representing had a form or species which somehow made it be the representing of a triangle.

40. We have to characterize this form in a sort of tautologous way. What is the form by virtue of which this is a representing of a triangle as opposed to a circle, or a cow, or a horse? Every act of representing has a form which determines what is going to be its content. The point is that the act is directed upon something, something other than itself. So, there are two ways in which the nature triangularity, or triangle, comes in: one is as the content; the other is as the form. Its species or form is to be a representing of a triangle and the triangle comes in two ways: the act of representing represents something other than itself, the immanent object triangle, and it has to have as an act a certain chunk of nature, that which directs it, points it in one direction rather than another. We can't say much about the species of the act other than it is that which determines the act is the representing of a triangle as opposed to a circle and so on. You get a rather uninformative characterization of the form of the act of representing.

41. Scholastic philosophers were good at drawing distinctions and holding fast to them. But that's a kind of boring distinction. It doesn't seem to be particularly

illuminating. So, as scholasticism degenerated, this nice distinction between form of the act and content of the act tended not to play a very active role, but you'll find traces of it.

42. On this view, the concept is simply the ability to have acts: to have the concept of a triangle is to be able to have acts of that form and that content. The relationship between the concept and the act is just the simple relation between any ability and an actuality that realizes that ability. When they blurred the distinction between the form and the content of the act and took the notion of representing as basic, the "dominant" terminology was that of content.

43. I'm not dealing here with the concept formation aspect of scholastic thought but with the sheer categories in terms of which they approached the intellectual act. Descartes adheres to the scholastic tradition. In the *Objections and Replies*, he has some very subtle scholastic philosophers attacking him and he shows great skill in replying.<sup>3</sup> (The rationalists show a reliance on the heritage; the empiricists in Britain had no such influence. The scholastic distinctions had disappeared. Thomas Reid was a rebirth of scholastic thought in the British Isles.) In any case, Descartes at that time shows the distinction between the form and the content. Though the scholastics laid a great deal of stress on form, that is not so in Descartes. When Descartes speaks of form, he is usually worried about the difference between willings, volitions, etc., and not what it is by virtue of which an act has content.

44. The dominance of content is what led, as you know, to many of the puzzles of skepticism: we're limited to the content of our own minds. That's where a lot of historical pitfalls or booby traps lay. You can see the problem that would be generated. The Aristotelians held that our thoughts give a reliable account of reality because they are caused by reality; so the Aristotelians think of our concepts as having their source in the world. But suppose you hold an innatist theory. God could cause us to have all the concepts we have. But how do we know they correspond to reality? There might be a demon. God has the concept. He can cause something to have concepts; and he may do so but cause concepts which have no hook-up. What is the source of the reliability of the concepts? Descartes argues that since God is good he wouldn't deceive us. As long as we hold to God's existence, we have no reason to believe in a demon. Actually most of the time you don't care if reality corresponds to your concepts, but if you start to worry about it, you have to go sit down in your study and reason it out.

45. Descartes at times shows the need for the form and content distinction though the typical metaphor which Descartes uses is act/content. He takes the notion of content as the basic feature of his doctrine of representing. The basic ontology says that you have "intelligibles", such as triangularity, existing primarily in the mind of God.<sup>4</sup> Then again, they exist as represented by mental acts and, in some

<sup>3</sup>For the scholastic influence upon Descartes, see *Mechanizing the Magic: Descartes and Suarez*, by Pedro Amaral (Mellen Press, 2002).

<sup>4</sup>See *Thomas Reid*, by Hamilton, 953.

sense, being participated in by objects of the world and minds. The primary mode of being of "intelligibles" is their being in the mind of God.

#### E. The primordial nature of God

46. Actually, more needs to be said here: there was reflection on the distinction between what God represents and the aspects of God which are even more primary than that. What God represents is what is in God's understanding. This is not the most basic reality that intelligibles have. To be considered to be in the nature of God is to be considered to be participated in by finite things, many finite things. So the aspects of God reflect the ways in which God can be "imitated". And what God represents is grounded in what Whitehead calls the "Primordial Nature of God". The Primordial Nature of God is partakeable of, or imitable by, finite things. The explicit understanding of God's representing is derivative from that so that, even in the case of God, *triangularity* as something represented is less basic than the formal nature of God, God in his pure actuality. That leaves a little room here for drawing the distinction between the ultimate ground of intelligibility and what God represents. This is more like a human understanding.

47. The reason I mention this is that Descartes has a fascinating doctrine according to which God creates the eternal verities. It seems to me that this springs from the medieval distinction between the Primordial Nature of God, God as imitable, and then God's understanding, something like mental acts having content. God's understanding "becomes" within God in a basic measure and in that sense, using the word 'cause' in that marvelous way in which it is used in the metaphysical tradition, God ultimately issues a cause and God is the cause of his understanding. Thus, God would be the cause of eternal truths.

48. Descartes says that God is completely free in causing eternal truths; he isn't constrained by any thing other than himself. For Descartes, to be free is to be unconstrained.<sup>5</sup> God is not constrained. Indeed, Descartes goes so far as to say that God might have chosen other eternal truths (to emphasize God's freedom), even so far as to suggest that God might have made it an eternal truth that a square not have four sides. A very baffling thesis. I mention this just to emphasize again that Descartes is working within a very rich tradition.

#### F. Simplicity and necessity

49. One of the key topics in Descartes is the topic of simplicity. I took as my example of a intelligible, triangularity, but triangularity is clearly complex in some sense. We can spell out what is involved in being a triangle. We do this in terms of definition. Think of the standard classical definition of a triangle as a plain figure

<sup>5</sup>A characteristic (being unconstrained) that Descartes carries over to the will as that whose perfection most nearly approaches the Divine (see AT viii, 57). We affirm the truth of basic ideas because we ineluctably pull ourselves to do so: the impossibility of indifference is a result of freedom.

bounded by three straight lines. This points down from the complex, triangle, to simples such as, line, straight and so on. Descartes thinks (and this is a theme right from the beginning of his work) of intelligibles as consisting of simples: simple natures. He says in the *Rules*, when he refers to the second part of his task, "that was to distinguish accurately the notions of simple things from those which are built up out of them." (HR I, 40)

50. He goes on to say,

Hence here we shall treat of things only in relation to our understanding's awareness of them and shall call those only simple, the cognition of which is so clear and so distinct that they cannot be analyzed by the mind into others more distinctly known. Such are figure, extension, motion etc.; all others we conceive to be in some way compounded out of these. This principle must be taken so universally as not even to leave out these objects which we sometimes obtain by abstraction from the simple natures themselves. This we do, for example when we say that figure is the limit of an extended thing, conceiving by the term limit something more universal than by the term figure, since we can talk of a limit of duration or a limit of motion and so on. But if our contention is right, for then, even though we find the meaning of limit by abstracting it from figure, nevertheless it should not for that reason seem simpler than figure.

(And he makes the very interesting point here which was lost very soon.)

Rather since it is predicated of other things, as for example of the extreme bounds of a space of time or of a motion, etc., things which are wholly different from figure, it must be abstracted from those natures also; consequently it is something compounded out of a number of natures wholly diverse, of which it can be only ambiguously predicated. (HR I, 41)

Actually, what he means here is that we have a family of notions of a limit, a spatial limit, a limit of motion, a limit of time and there is an analogy between a limit of time and a limit of space. This notion of analogy, of course, was a very important notion in medieval philosophy and he is really saying that, instead of the notion of a limit being simpler than the notion of a figure, it is something which is analogously present in these different domains. This is something that I comment on to show that he does have a number of subtle things to say, but the basic idea he is working with is the distinction between the simple and the complex.

51. In addition, he speaks of "necessary connections" between simples. This is, I think, a very interesting theme in relation to the later distinction between analytic and synthetic necessary truths. He talks about mental vision again after he talked about simple natures being necessarily conjoined. And he says, "it is quite clear that mental vision extends to all those simple natures and to the necessary conditions between them." We have the notion of simple natures  $S_1$ ,  $S_2$  and of there being a connection between them. One is tempted, since he is very exclusively talking about simples here, to say that the connection between these natures would

be in representing it in this way. (Figure 7)

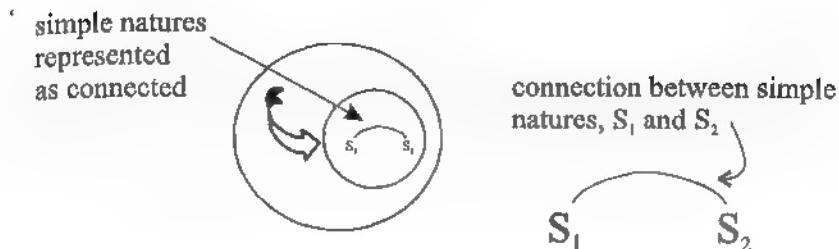


Figure 7

We are representing, in Kant's sense, a synthetic necessary truth.

52. Now, during his period the distinction between analytic and synthetic was not explicitly drawn, but I think we should be prepared to do so. I would say that at the beginning of this period (certainly for Descartes) that it is not held explicitly that all necessary truths are analytic in the sense we have in the form that Kant made paradigmatic: "All A/B is A". The nature A/B is a complex consisting of A and B.

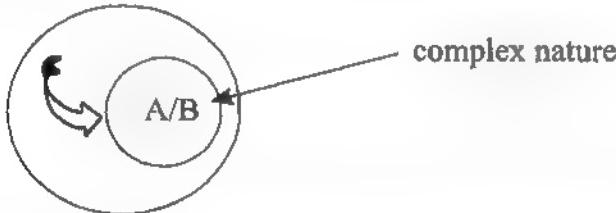


Figure 8

Rather, we have the notion of there being necessary truths some of which are clearly recognized as analytic, but nowhere except in passages like this, do we find an explicit recognition of the idea of there being synthetic necessary truths.

53. Now you might think that they did tie closely together the notion of a necessary truth with the notion of something, the denial of which would be "contradictory", but you must be prepared to find the word 'contradictory' is often used in such a way that it hardly means more than "impossible". You have a broad use of "necessary" and a broad use of "contradictory" so that if you run across a passage in which somebody says that it would be "contradictory" to say that such and such, that may mean that it is analytic, but the word 'contradictory' can be used in the broad sense to mean logically impossible. These terms are all still up for grabs in a certain sense. Something could be logically impossible without being contradictory in the sense that we would feel comfortable about.

54. Let me try another passage here in which he speaks in a different meta-

phor. He says,

In the fourth place we point out that the union of these things one with another [now these things are the natures, ws] is either necessary or contingent. It is necessary when one is so implied in the concept of another in a confused sort of way that we cannot conceive either distinctly, if our thought assigns to them separateness from each other. Thus figure is conjoined with extension, motion with duration or time, and so on, because it is impossible to conceive of a figure that has no extension, nor of a motion that has no duration. Thus likewise if I say 'four and three are seven', this union is necessary. For we do not conceive the number seven distinctly unless we include in it the number three and four in some confused way. (HR I, 43)

We have the metaphor of inclusion and the notion of confused. In this passage, as you see, the word 'confused' is used in the sense that relates to the scholastic use of the term 'con-fusa' which means blended together. This is a metaphysical sense of the word 'confused' (fused together) and that goes along with the notion of a synthetic connection. In this passage, we have this metaphor of simple natures being confused together, blended together, and then right after this again, we get the notion of combination or mixture. It is important to see that lurking in Descartes' discussion of necessary truth, of possibility, and of impossibility, is the distinction which Locke was later to make explicit: the distinction between analytic and synthetic. Locke drew a distinction between trifling truths which in Kantian terms is illustrated by "All A/B is A" and what Locke calls, as opposed to the trifling, the non-trifling knowledge which he thinks we have, for example, in the case of geometry. The axioms of geometry would not be trifling; yet they would be such that in a straightforward sense the denial of them would be contradictory. In Descartes, we do find willingness to use words like 'necessary' and 'logically impossible' in a broad sense which calls out for the kind of distinction which later was to be made.

#### *G. Natures and connection; a form of subjectivism*

55. It is interesting to note, for example, that in the formalization that he gives of the proof of the real distinction of the mind and body in the *Reply to Objections Two*, we find two ways of talking about the relation of existence to the nature of God in his presentation of the ontological argument. He says,

Fifthly, I require my readers to dwell long and much in contemplation of the nature of the supremely perfect Being. Among other things they must reflect that while possible existence indeed attaches to the ideas of all other natures, in the case of the idea of God that existence is not possible but wholly necessary. (HR ii, 55)

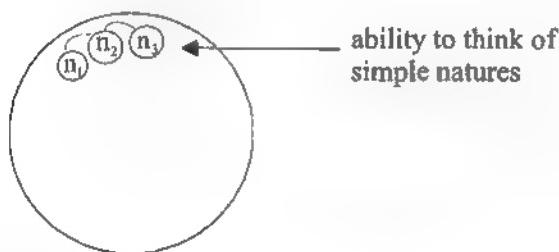
He says necessary existence *attaches* to the existence of God. Now, "attaches" –on

his view, that looks like the case of one nature being attached to another nature. But later on, when he presents Axiom 10, he says,

Existence is contained in the idea or concept of everything because we can conceive nothing except as existent, with this difference, that possible or contingent existence is contained in the concept of a limited thing, but necessary and perfect existence in the concept of a supremely perfect being. (HR 11, 57)

Notice that here he speaks of necessary existence being "contained in" the concept of God where before he spoke of necessary existence as being "attached to" the nature of God. The moral of that is that it was not clear to Descartes in exactly what way the nature of God and the necessary existence are related.

56. Descartes follows the Platonic tradition in holding that we have innate concepts; we have simple concepts and abilities to think of simple natures.



**Figure 9**

According to the doctrine we have been looking at, the content of this concept, nature<sub>1</sub>, would be connected with the content of this concept, nature<sub>2</sub>. So we have a diagrammatic representation of our latent knowledge, for example, that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points. This knowledge might involve nature<sub>3</sub>—point, line, straight line. These involve ideas in the mind of God: nature<sub>1</sub>, nature<sub>2</sub>, nature<sub>3</sub>, and they are connected. There is a connection between the natures and these being embodied in the world or there being objects exemplifying these natures in the world where these natures would be connected. Look at the natures involved in "that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points". If we had a straight line, these three natures would form a sort of a package deal in that there is a connection between the natures and then this being a straight line, it would be the shortest distance between two points. The natures would be represented here (Figure 10).

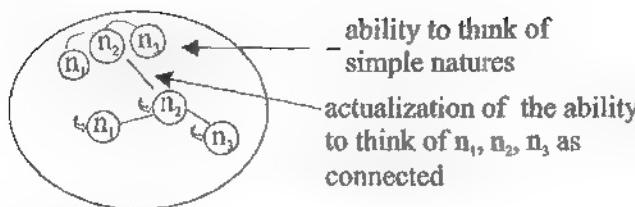


Figure 10

God would be the source of these natures. There would be an act of representing  $n_1$ , an act of representing  $n_2$ , an act of representing  $n_3$ . Each would be the actualization of an ability: the contents of these are connected; and presumably we would be aware that the contents that they are representing are connected.

57. It is at this stage that the puzzles which Descartes was concerned with in the *Meditations* emerge. Just because the contents of our representations are connected, why should reality pay any attention to that? Abstractly, we can conceive that the straight line might not be the shortest distance between two points. Out here in actual reality, the contents of representations—straight lines—would have quite different properties. The general problem arises: given that our only direct contact with nature is through the contents of our representings, literally the contents of our personal, private representings, why should reality pay any attention to it? This is how the skeptical problem arose.

58. Now, as I said before, Descartes proves the existence of God. Here is the nature of a perfect being and the nature of God. Here is the concept of God and there is a connection in one way or another, either analytic or synthetic, between existence and God. How can we rely on this connection? Suppose we do see a connection between a perfect being and necessarily existing. How can we rely on that?

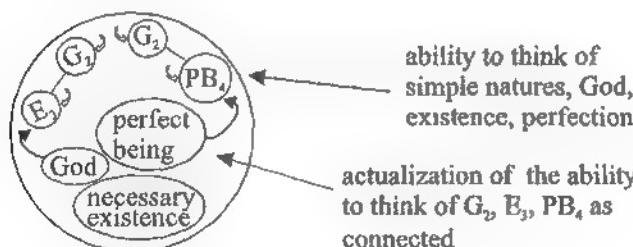


Figure 11

59. I think that here is where Descartes would want to come very close to making this analytic so that it would be, in a tough sense, a contradiction to deny that God exists. Yet, even then, even if we hold this to be contradictory, why should we not raise the problem, "why should reality pay attention to necessary connections,

even analytic ones?" Why not raise the problem in this instance, even when it includes necessary connections in a very tough sense between contents of our actual representings?

60. What Descartes has to say here is that, in the first place, we clearly see this connection. This doesn't solve the problem, however, because the problem is one which we must take beyond the example he gives, for example, the cogito, where we are actually confronted with the fact itself "I, thinking being, exist."

61. Still, this fact is something that is fairly distinctly seen and in some way we also directly experience ourselves and our own existence. This is part of it. There is more to it than that. Descartes tries to convince us that there would be a fiction in "I do not exist", that "I do not exist" is logically, in a very tough sense, absurd. But okay, suppose that denying the "cogito" is logically absurd. This by itself would not guarantee that what we clearly and distinctly perceive in general is true unless we were simply to lay down the principle that "that the denial of which is self-contradictory is necessarily true," as something explicit. But he never laid down such a principle. He just gets the general reliance, leaving partially open exactly what the connection is between perfect beinghood and necessary existence.

#### *H. Freedom as constraint by one's self*

62. The problem is: how can we trust this connection? We leave aside the answer "it's analytic," and we get this theme in Descartes: namely, we can't think otherwise. We think clearly and distinctly and we can't think otherwise. His argument here is that we are free when we are unable to do otherwise.

63. This is a rather interesting theme. It connects the notion of freedom with necessity in a nice way which was echoed by other philosophers. We are not forced by anything else to think. You have to remember that, when we are representing something, we are dealing directly with items that exist in our minds. So, his argument is that, when it comes to clear and distinct perceptions, we cannot think otherwise. We are still free because nothing other than ourselves is constraining our freedom. All right, what I clearly and distinctly perceive of the existence of a necessary being (of a perfect being), I cannot, as it were, help but believe or accept and nothing other than myself is forcing me to accept this.

64. You can see the subjectivism that is lurking here. When I clearly and distinctly perceive that God is a perfect being, metaphysically perfect and therefore morally perfect because he lacks nothing, what motive do I have for saying anything is wrong? So, I freely believe clearly and distinctly that God exists and that he is no deceiver and that no demon can exist: that he would permit no demon to exist. So, this all fits together in a subjective way. I cannot entertain hyperbolic doubt because the demon is involved in the hyperbolic doubt and if I clearly distinctly perceive that God exists, then I cannot have any reason to doubt. There is no thought I can have that can wipe out the goodness and existence of God as prohibiting such deception. So that is his answer.

65. As I said the resources are essentially in terms of what is in us: these natures are in us. To be sure, the natures are also in God and the natures are in the external world. But I represent them. In representing them, I am representing something that is in God and I am representing something, but I am still dealing with something that is in me.

### *I. Skepticism and representationalism*

66. Now, as I said, it is easy to see how one who isn't convinced by the ontological argument feels skeptical doubts arising. Suppose that the natures in my mind are connected. Why should those natures be connected anywhere else? And this is the problem that Descartes felt and it is the problem of the reliability of thought. Now, it is no answer to say, "Well, God gives me these thoughts because you know that God exists by the nature in you of the divine being and the nature in you of existence." The notion that ideas are in the mind is to be taken very seriously: this notion of content "in the mind." As far as my thinking is concerned, what I am directly dealing with is natures that are, as it were, ontologically dependent on me. There are such things if we can defend the view that they also depend upon God and also on the things that exemplify them. We will be exploring the distinction between the kind of being that natures have in the world in relation to the kind of being that they have in God and the kind of being that they have in our mind, particularly in connection, for example, with Spinoza.

67. Descartes raised the problem of skepticism; it makes clear how uniquely subjectivist he is and we look for the subjectivism elsewhere. That is one reason that Malebranche was unhappy with Descartes. Malebranche presses this question again and again, "Do the ideas of natures depend on me?" Malebranche is moving almost toward a direct realist view that when we clearly and distinctly see a connection of natures, what we are really doing is seeing it in the understanding of God. That way Malebranche sought to undercut Descartes' skepticism. Malebranche thought that it was absurd to say that what I am dealing with literally when I clearly and distinctly perceive something is something literally in my mind, dependent on it and yet somehow distinct from it.

68. Suppose Smith and Jones over there are considering nature<sub>1</sub>. You see, we would be tempted to say, "well, in some way they are thinking of literally the same thing: there is one item, namely the nature (say, of what it is to be a mind) and that one thing is somehow involved in what Jones is thinking and what Smith is thinking." We emphasize, then, the identity of natures with respect to mind, and this is what Malebranche emphasizes: that when people are dealing with what it is to be a mind, they are dealing with one thing which is the same for many minds. He accuses Descartes (with some justification) of watering this down, saying, "well, something similar is in my mind to what is in your mind; there isn't really the same nature here as here; they are similar items." We have similar ideas. Certainly Descartes is open to that charge.

69. Look at Plato's view. Plato actually, as I said, holds a representative theory of awareness of natures (in the terminology of natures). But suppose Plato had not held a representative theory but some kind of direct realism like G.E. Moore's so that two minds, when they deal with triangularity, are dealing with something that is literally one and the same identical nature. If this were the case, then the theory would be that we have an a priori grip on the world of space and time because we apprehend connections, say, between triangularity and having an area equal to one-half the base times the height ( $a=1/2bh$ ). This is a standard modern Platonistic account of a priori knowledge. We would have a grip on all particulars which exemplify triangularity because anything which exemplifies triangularity has got to take on the character of having  $a=1/2bh$ . Platonists would have a straightforward theory of a priori knowledge if they were direct Platonists. If they are representative Platonists, then of course representation comes in and the problem of why reality should pay any attention to connections between things that exist in my representations. That is the Cartesian problem.

70. G. E. Moore and the direct Platonists of the early part of this century attacked all forms of representationalism and they held that when we get to the natures themselves, we are getting to identical things. Different minds get to them and, by doing so, are getting hold of truths about actual existence. As I said, we see steps in this direction in Malebranche with the exception, that for Plato himself and for Moore, these intelligibles have a being that is independent of mind. They would exist even if there were no minds. For Malebranche, the primary locus of these natures is in God and that is why he can speak of seeing all things in God. We see these truths in God.

#### *J. External versus internal connections*

71. To the extent that Descartes would think that mental acts involved the natures, he would also think of them, in some sense, as connected. But the important thing is that the natures are connected. In addition to this, we have all this subjectivist ontology of the status of natures. Descartes simply accepts the connections of natures and thinks that these connections are what make it impossible for us to think differently. We would be uncomfortable, when looking at it from the perspective of the period, about saying that to see something as a necessary truth is simply to be unable to think otherwise. Descartes wants to give it some basis in terms of the connections between natures; "connection," "chain" are metaphors, of course.<sup>6</sup> I think this diagram (Figure 12) will be helpful for later on when we are dealing with a contrast between Hume and the Rationalists.

<sup>6</sup>Earlier, I had asked Sellars to say more about the idea of a connection in AT X, 421, 13 (*conjunctionem*) and the connection AT X, 421, 112 (*compositio*), AT X, 421 1/23 (*annexus*). He is doing so at this point.

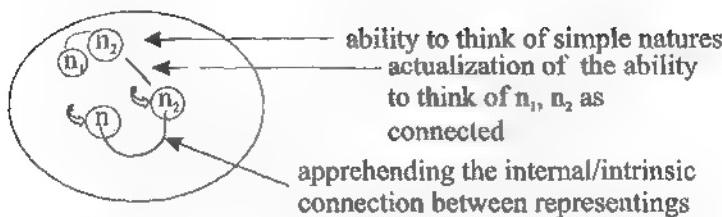


Figure 12

72. Hume thinks that we have simple concepts. The kind of connection that exists between them we draw as a line connecting the acts (as opposed to the contents as in figure 12). That is an associative bond that can be regarded as an external connection between concepts. For example, take the case in which you see lightning and you hear thunder, and, again, see lightning, hear thunder:

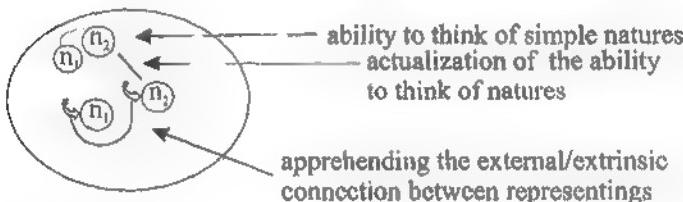


Figure 13

Our concept of lightning,  $L_1$ , and our concept of thunder  $T_1$ , are connected, but it won't be a connection between the *content* of concepts as it would be for the Rationalists.

73. The Rationalists emphasized connections between natures which are contents of concepts whereas Hume emphasizes cases of the external connections of the associative type between concepts where this connection often gets confused with internal connections. You see Hume actually holds that what in point of fact is an external connection between concepts brought about by the vicissitudes of experience is "confusable" with the kinds of connection which is a logical connection between contents. So we come to think of the content of one concept connected with the content of another.<sup>7</sup>

74. The notion of connections between natures is endemic in rationalism, but

<sup>7</sup>Sellars follows the metaphor of the connection between concepts from the birth of synthetic a priori truth in Descartes, through its emergence in Locke and Berkeley in the form of agreement and disagreement between ideas, and relations of ideas, and Hume's attack on the notion of agreement. Hume argues that what had been traditionally taken as the agreement between contents of ideas is, in reality, a confusion of external relations between the acts with internal relations between the contents. That is, external relations (associations) are taken as internal relations (disagreement or implication between concepts). Since only external relations exist, there are no a priori truths. Kant, of course, sees all this and provides a theory to circumvent the difficulties.

it should not be confused with the mere psychological inability to think otherwise. Indeed, the connection is supposed to ground the inability to think otherwise. In Aristotle, for example, there are necessary connections between natures. In the axioms of geometry, we see the connection between the character of being a straight line and the character of being the shortest distance between two points. This would be reflected in certain abilities and disabilities psychologically, but it wouldn't simply be constituted by the fact that we can't think otherwise.

*K. An answer to a question: perception, awareness as, and aensation*

(α) Perception versus sensation

75. The account I give of sense impressions is that the sense impression of a red triangle, for example, is not only a state of a perceiver which is brought about in standard conditions by a red and triangular physical object, but also can be spelled out in terms of adverbial modifiers that have a structure logically analogous to their structure when they are used as predicates applying to physical objects. We can spell out the properties in terms of predicates which apply to physical objects. What I had in mind there (in the paper) is my own theory of sense impressions and that is the third way.<sup>8</sup>

76. Descartes has this problem of getting color and shape together in experience. The nice thing about my theory of sense impressions is that it treats shape and color in a completely parallel way. The problem in Descartes' case doesn't arise if you draw additional distinctions. Furthermore, sense impressions, as I construe them, are non-epistemic states except in the sense that they make knowledge possible. They are not in themselves awarenesses of items as red triangles whereas, when Descartes is concerned with perceptions in his sense (as contrasted with sensations), it is clear that they are awareness of items as a certain sort. What I try to do in the paper is to show that in this period there is really a conflation of sense impressions and what I call the perceptions of items as being of a certain sort, the perception of a triangle as a triangle, the perception of a circle as circle. There is a conflation of these two and I will say something more about that today.

77. In effect, what I am saying is that in this period there was lurking a distinction that was never clearly drawn so that every perception (in the broad sense) for Descartes tends to be a perception of a certain item as being of that kind and therefore tends to be cognitive. Consider pain—you see that is the other pole. Pain is, in the broad sense, somehow a *cogitatio*; it is somehow an idea in the broad sense and yet a pain is not as such a cognitive representation. You are not cognizing something when you have the feeling of pain. Descartes seems to recognize that a pain can be representative without being a cognizing whereas all of the things that he wants to call perceptions are really cognitive.

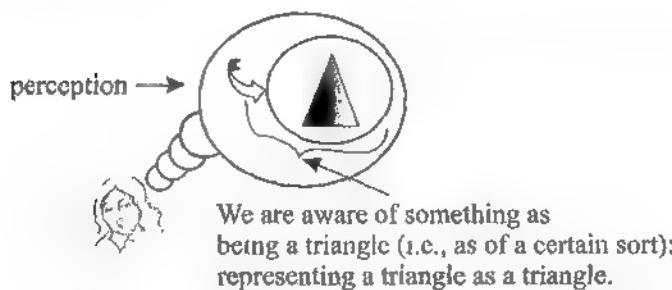
78. They are cognitive in the sense that they are classificatory; they are recog-

<sup>8</sup>The "third" way of spelling out the relation between properties described in *BD* (¶36 and ¶91). *BD* (95) is reprinted in *KTM* (118).

nitions, thoughts of an item as being of a certain kind. When you have a perception of a triangle, you are aware of something as being a triangle. Now the triangle need not have any actual existence in the world, but simply insofar as you are representing a triangle you are representing a triangle as a triangle. This feature was taken over by Locke. I'll be discussing that in a moment. When it comes to perceptions, they are clearly awarenesses of items as being of a certain sort: either generic or specific. But, as I said, when it comes to a feeling of pain, that is a mental state for Descartes and we are aware of it as a pain, but it is not an awareness of anything. It is just a feeling of pain.

79. Descartes would have granted that a feeling of pain, although it is not in the same sense an awareness of something as a perception is, is nevertheless a pain and can represent. We don't have a nice theory of representation in Descartes, a theory as to what different kinds of representation there are. But at least a pain could represent, as I put it in the paper, a physiological state of the hammered finger.<sup>9</sup>

80. Perceptions are awarenesses. Here (Figure 14) is an awareness of an equilateral triangle as an equilateral triangle. I spent some time trying to show where this theme comes from. It actually goes into Kant's notion of an intuition which is an awareness of an individual item as being of a certain sort. It goes back to the Aristotelian tradition, to the representation of a this-such (*tode ti*) as a this-such. Perceptions are, for Descartes, awarenesses of individuals if they are very determinate. There is no real awareness of individuality or particularity in this period. Kant is really the first one who brought back into philosophy a clear distinction between individuals and generals so that the pain here could represent in a broad sense which is unspecified. There is no theory of the sense in which pains represent, but the pain itself wouldn't have this kind of structure of being the awareness of an item as of a certain sort.

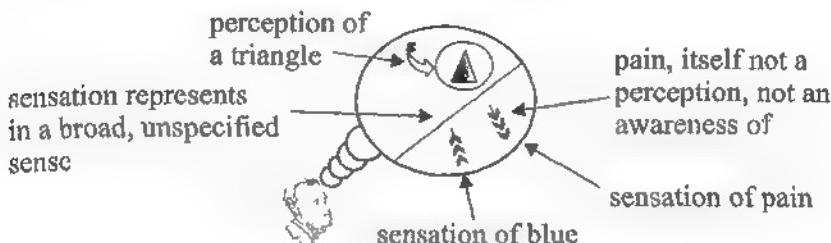


**Figure 14**

I mean this is actually a pain (Figure 15). The *esse* of pain is to be felt. Here (Figure 15) is an actual pain. It has fully actual existence as a pain and we can be aware of

<sup>9</sup>BD, ¶24

it as being a pain. The awareness of it as being a pain is a perception, but the pain itself is not a perception. It is just a feeling of pain.



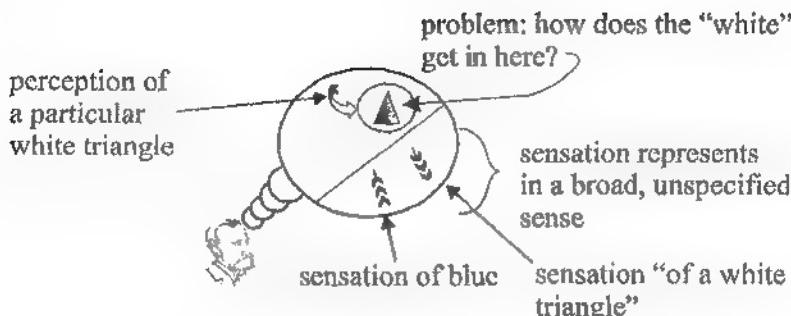
**Figure 15**

81. I pointed out in the essay that Descartes tends to treat blue as analogous to pain. So we get a division between sensation and perception. I am not talking about generic ideas, or abstract ideas. A sensation of blue: it is a sensation of which we can be aware, but it itself isn't be an awareness. It is something the mind can be aware of, but it itself isn't an awareness although it represents.

82. Colors, for Descartes, represent minute structural features of the external objects which are their external causes. So sensations can represent and we are aware of them, but they are not themselves perceptions. So we have that important distinction in Descartes, I was suggesting, between sensations and perceptions.

### (β) "Seamlessness"

83. As I said, he treats our awareness of a particular shape as a perception, for example, an awareness of a triangle as a triangle. Suppose you have the experience of a blue triangle or of a white triangle (Figure 16). The white that you experience is a sensation in your soul. The triangle is a perception in your soul. How do you get the sensation and the perception together into one seamless phenomenologically unified experience?



**Figure 16**

Now what I argued in the paper is that in addition, you see, Descartes assumes that our awareness of our experience of shape comes in only through perceptions. That is what creates the problem: there is a category difference between the white and the triangle. How does the "white" get into there, so to speak?<sup>10</sup>

84. If you take my distinction between sense impressions and intuitions (in the Kantian sense), then you can have a sense impression of a blue triangle which is distinguished from the intuitive representation of—a perception of, in Descartes' sense—a blue triangle. So that for me, triangularity can exist at the level of sensations just as blue can. So at both the level of sensation and the level of perception, the blue and the triangle can be together. Descartes' problem is that he characterizes blue as a sensation and puts it along with pain and characterizes our awareness, our experience of shape as a perception, as already cognitive (a radically different characterization).

85. My sense impression of a blue triangle is a state of a person which is normally brought about in standard conditions, in the normal perceiver, by a blue triangular object. Furthermore, there is a family of predicates pertaining to sense impressions which have a logical structure (not in the logicians' use of "logical structure", but in the sense in which Wittgenstein talks about the logical structure of concepts), a logical structure which is analogous to that of the family of color predicates and shape predicates. I develop this theory in a number of places.

86. Question: Would the '{' be a shorthand way of talking about a certain functionally characterized nexus of the formal properties belonging to the occurrent act?<sup>11</sup>

We have a family of ordinary color predicates and shape predicates. What I am arguing is that we can have, correspondingly, as predicates of sense impressions, predicates formed by analogy. They would have similar properties. For example, let us suppose that orange is between red and yellow. Then, analogously, there is a character of the property being a sensation of orange: that being "of orange", that

<sup>10</sup>BD, ¶34-48.

<sup>11</sup>The '{' notation appears in BD, ¶36 and ¶92.

property of a sensation, has a similar kind of ordering with respect to *betweeness*.

87. Take the case of incompatibility. Nothing can be red and blue all over; so, a sense impression can't be red, and blue, all over. These are "formal" properties of the sense impression. A sense impression is formally, as opposed to objectively, red, and blue, and triangular. That is the difference between a sensation and a perception in the Cartesian sense; in a perception, in the Cartesian sense, the character of being triangular is present only objectively. I would say that there is a functional role of these sense impression concepts because they are part of a theory of perception. The theory tells us how sense impressions represent the properties of external objects; so it is a theory of representation as well. I am perfectly happy with both the word 'formal' and the word 'functional' and I think that you have given me a chance to sketch out the view that I hold.

88. My interpretation of this period is that lurking in some level of the mind of these philosophers is this distinction:

sensations as actually formally characterized by certain properties, but not really shape literally, but as formally characterized by certain analogical properties;

perceptions as representations of items as of a certain sort and involving intentionality and, therefore, objective presence.

The distinction between them is lurking there, but it is not clearly drawn; therefore it gets blurred and that leads to some of the paradoxical and, indeed, absurd conclusions that we often get.

#### (γ) An example of confusions

89. Descartes is reasonably clear. There are sensations and there are perceptions. What arises in the case of Descartes is the problem, "how do they function together to give us the phenomenologically seamless experience, for example, of a blue triangle?" "How do sensation and perception cooperate in order to bring about that experience?" Descartes is, as I indicated, very inadequate, but very explicit on the topic. Malebranche attempts to come to grips with it because, for Malebranche, there is a radical distinction between sensation and perception—perceptions are, more or less, clear and distinct ideas, the geometrical ones. But it will be with the British Empiricists, Locke, Berkeley, and Hume that this "lurkingness" will become more manifest.

90. I can find this, for example, in the case of Locke (and Locke is notorious for blending different strata of perceptual thinking together in almost the same passage). Thus, according to Locke, if there is an experience of a red triangle, he sometimes clearly thinks of this as there actually being a red triangle; by God, there is a red triangle! That would mean then that when you have the idea of a red triangle, there actually is a red triangle. But then, of course, he ponders about that

and thinks that, after all, the experience is in your mind. Then he is brought back to the issue, "How can there be a red triangle in the mind?" If you read certain passages you will find one theme: namely, that ideas are, as it were, actual examples of what they are ideas of. And, in other passages and at another level, they are not, as it were, actual examples of what they are ideas of.

91. Of course, scholastics would have said that the representation of triangle in one sense is actually a triangle, but it is not a triangle in the way in which material things are triangles. It is immaterially triangular. One way of putting it is to say that there are two kinds of predication of the nature. There is the way in which triangularity is properly predicated of an idea and the way in which triangularity is properly predicated of an actual thing. Locke, as you know, does not have these distinctions. By the time of Locke all the important and clear and useful distinctions that the scholastics had drawn had just disappeared. So Locke glibly talks as if the idea of a triangle is triangular, not, of course, immaterially triangular or objectively triangular, but just triangular. Still, in other passages it is quite clear that it is not triangular, just "of" a triangle. So he relies on very informal language—not regimented at all—to take him from passage to passage so that, in a sense, they have a coherent intelligibility. However, if you read them without projecting into them all the distinctions which should be drawn, they really are incoherent. This will come out if we work with Locke's theory of ideas.

92. Take, for example, that famous passage when he says that the general idea of a triangle, the abstract idea of a triangle is the idea of a triangle which is equicrural, isosceles, scalenon and none of them and all of them at once. By commenting on that one passage, you can, in the light of the appropriate distinctions, see what Locke is desperately trying to say and Berkeley jumps on Locke there and has been regarded as having demolished Locke.<sup>12</sup> Well, of course in a sense, he did because Locke is just a good sloppy common sense philosopher whose whole is more coherent than his parts. Even Hume, we will find, is illuminated by these distinctions and that is one of the things that I would want to argue. (As a matter of fact, the next installment is a paper on Hume.)

#### (δ) Back to Descartes: awareness

93. Let's go ahead, then, and I'll give you some more things to react to. Let's start out with that theme that I had been working with in some of my illustrations. I'm talking about Descartes. There is a perception of triangle, a representing of a triangle as a triangle. It is an awareness of a triangle as a triangle, a representing of a triangle as a triangle. Either we can think of this as a mental act which has a

<sup>12</sup>The passage is, "For example, does it not require some pains and skill to form the general idea of a triangle (which is yet none of the most abstract, comprehensive, and difficult), for it must be neither oblique, nor rectangle, neither equilateral, equicrural, nor scalenon, but all and none of these at once. In effect, it is something imperfect, that cannot exist; an idea wherein some parts of several different and inconsistent ideas are put together." *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Book 4, "Of Knowledge and Opinion," Chapter 7, "Of Maxims."

certain content or we can think of it in more classical terms as a mental act which, in a unique kind of way, has the character of being a triangle which is different from the way in which physical triangles have this. Now either of these ways occurs at the beginning of this period almost interchangeably. Sometimes the emphasis is on content; sometimes the other way of talking would be predominant; and usually they are combined because the scholastics combined them. After all, the act-content way of talking gives you a kind of notion of the mind paying *attention* to a triangle, of being *directed* upon a triangle, whereas if you simply say that the mental act has in a unique way that character of being triangular, that does not seem to capture the "directedness" of the thought so predominantly. You will find philosophers using the act-content way and indeed the other way tends to fall off although, in some passages, you will find really two themes right together.

94. There is a feeling of pain, for example, or a sensation of blue (Figure 17). For Descartes, these are thoughts in the very broad sense as that of which we are conscious and in some sense they go on in the mind. They are states of mind.

problem: what kind of act is this?

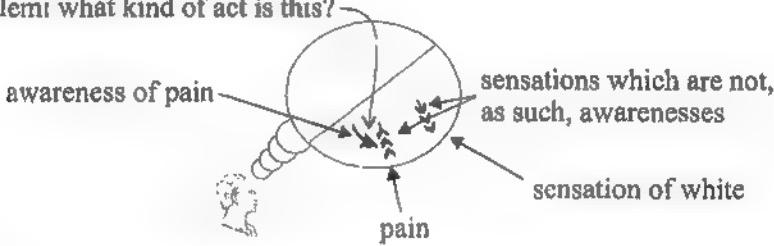


Figure 17

Now, of course, in Descartes there is an elusive sense in which there is a substantial tie between mind and body. Descartes wants to say that sensation is really a result of the substantial tie between mind and body: so, should we say that sensations aren't thoughts? or should we say that they are thoughts which somehow depend on the substantial connection between the brain, the pineal gland, and the mind? Descartes never really spells this out. For the moment I will leave that aside. It is quite clear that the body is very intimately involved in the occurrence of sensations.

95. But what I want to emphasize is that, according to Descartes, everything that goes on in the mind we are aware of. We are conscious of everything that goes on in our mind. This has traditionally been a source of great bafflement to philosophers. So, let us re-create some of this bafflement. Pain is not as such an awareness; it may represent, but it is not as such an awareness. Pain itself is not the awareness of a pain, but we can be aware of a pain.

96. Let us put it in like that: here (Figure 17) would be the awareness of the pain. The problem is, "what kind of an act is this awareness?" When you are aware of pain, there is a pain and an awareness of, the perception of, the pain. We might

ask the question, "doesn't this imply that logically there is a real distinction between the pain and the awareness of the pain so that in principle a person could have a pain in his mind without being aware of it?"

97. That is an age old problem that I am about to disturb a bit; let it live a bit. For Descartes, it is necessary that when a pain occurs an awareness of a pain occurs. Furthermore, if we have any perception, we are aware of having that perception. That can be taken along in these pictures (Figure 18).



Figure 18

There would be the awareness of the perception of a triangle. Let us take this as our paradigm because really, when the chips are down, this is Descartes' paradigm of representation. A representation, a perception of a triangle—what can we say about it? It is an awareness of a triangle as a triangle. It is a mental act in the sense of actuality as the realization of a potentiality which is the potentiality to represent a triangle. It itself is a *cogitatio*. The word '*cogitatio*' is translated as "thought" because generally Descartes refers to mental acts and the mental in general as the domain of *cogitationes*.

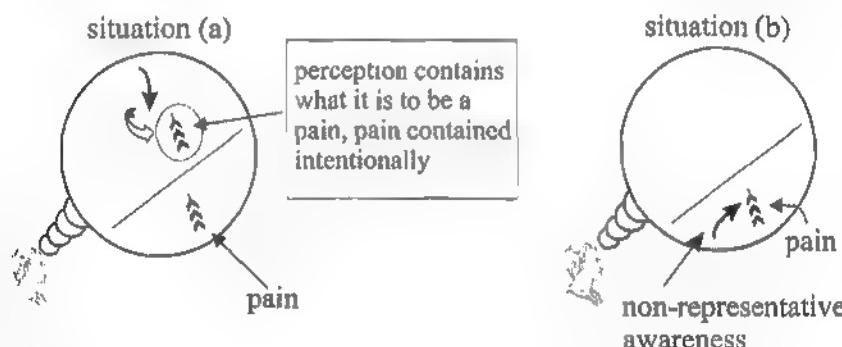
98. What the mind does is cogits. We have the verb '*cogitare*'. So it would be a "*cogitatio*." This person here, this mind, is cogitating so to speak, a triangle. But it is also aware that it is. If we take this way of talking about it, we can speak of this as a representing, a representative *cogitatio*. I was emphasizing this theme of representation, a very central theme in this whole period. It will be given different twists and different contexts but it is a key concept. The important thing that I brought out last time was that, for example, even according to Plato when one represents what it is to be a triangle, one isn't, as it were, related by a kind of Mooreian apprehension to the essence triangularity. One somehow has in one a representative state which represents what it is to be a triangle. So, we had already, then, the genesis of a representative theory of thinking.

99. Thoughts represents objects and do so by, in some sense, containing a likeness (we can use that word and then throw it out later). As I point out in the essay, Descartes speaks of ideas, in the narrow sense as likeness or images of things. I want you to note, of course, that the words 'likeness' and 'image' are being used in an analogical sense here without the analogy being spelled out. We had this very analogical sense of likeness, and the view that the idea represents a triangle or what it is to be a triangle by in some sense containing a likeness or being a likeness. Here

again this is a metaphysical notion of "likeness" and not just a simple straightforward honest to goodness likeness, in the sense in which "this is like that".

100. All right, so we had, then, this represents by containing a likeness in this broad metaphysical sense. If we suppose that in some way we particularize this representing so that it is a representing of a particular triangle and that here is a triangle which it is representing, then Descartes would have said that here (Figure 18) we have a case of a triangle which has normal existence, formal being, straightforward existence, first-class existence and that here would be a triangle likeness, an image-model representing in which somehow the what it is to be this particular object is contained. Contained in such a way that it is not really a triangle, it is that in a different form of participation.

101. This is what we have up here. Now the interesting problem arises if we construe a typical cogitatio as being of the form just described. When we are aware of blue and when we are aware of pain, is that also representative? In other words, when we are aware of pain, when we perceive our pain, is that because we have the following situation, situation (a) (Figure 19)?



**Figure 19**

Here is the pain and yet we have a cognition, a perception in which a pain is contained intentionally, a representation, an act as it were, in which is contained the *what it is to be* a pain and indeed the *what it is to be* a particular pain at this time.<sup>13</sup> Or is Descartes committed to situation (b) that when you are aware of the pain, when you perceive your pain, that it is nonrepresentative? The fact is that there is a tension in the whole Cartesian tradition and throughout this period; the standard conception of awareness is representative. You are aware of something by representing it and you are representing it by virtue of having a mental act which contains what you are aware of or are representing, but contains it in this unique kind of way which we have been discussing. When it comes to the awareness of a perception, is this perception of a perception also to be construed as representative? I raised the

<sup>13</sup>The phrase '*what it is to be*' is used in the way that '*nature*' was used earlier.

question in connection with the pain, but let's come over here (Figure 20).

102. Here is the representing of a triangle, the awareness of a triangle as a triangle. Now this is a cogitation; it goes on in the mind. Are we conscious of it, are we aware of it? Are we aware of it as a representative? Descartes says, "yes". There is a sort of, I won't say, a dilemma, because there is no trouble here, but at least there is a cloud no bigger than a man's hand. If he holds that when you are aware of this as a representing, you do so by representing it, then there would be a representing of your mind as containing a representing of triangle. If you take that line and you hold that every act that goes on in the mind is something you are conscious of, then you are on the classical regress.

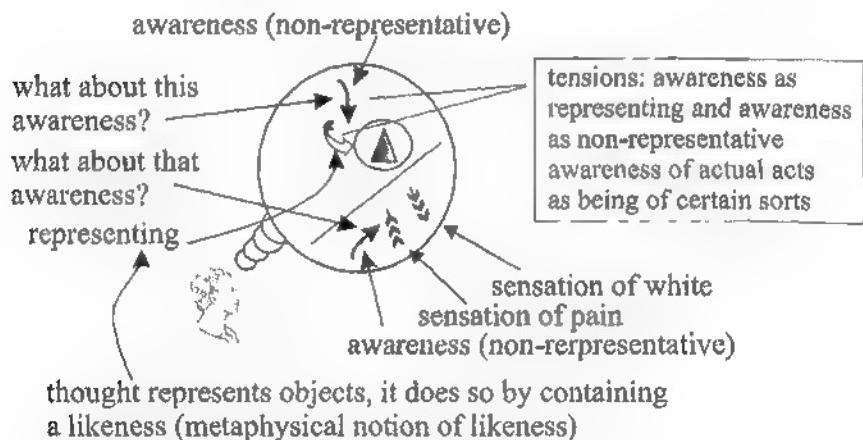


Figure 20

Of course, if Descartes merely said you *can* be aware of every act that goes on in your mind, then there would be no problem. Sometimes that is all he really seems to commit himself to, but at other times he seems to say that every idea we have, every cogitation we have, we are conscious of. So, of course it would seem then that you have to represent yourself as containing a representation of your self as containing a representation of a triangle and so on.

103. All right, well now clearly he doesn't hold that. There is no sign that any representation is the foundation of an infinite series of representations. Well, as I said, there are two ways of cutting this knot. One is to say that with respect to any representing, we can be aware of it. The other is to say that when you are aware of a cogitation which is a representing, you have an awareness of it which is not a representative awareness. It gets hold, it is an awareness which gets hold without having to represent. Now this is a classical theme in the history of philosophy: external objects of the past or of the future, we know by representing them. When it comes to what is in our own minds, we don't have to represent it: it is just shining up at us. I suspect that Descartes is thinking that in addition to representative

awareness, there is a kind of non-representative awareness of specific acts, of individual acts as being of a certain sort. There would be two kinds of representing an item as being of a certain sort.

104. Here (a) would be a representing of a triangle as a triangle, a representative awareness of a triangle as a triangle. And then, here (b) would be a non-representative awareness of something: namely, there would be a non-representative awareness of the perception of a triangle as a perception of a triangle (Figure 21).

### Two kinds of representing an item as of a certain sort:

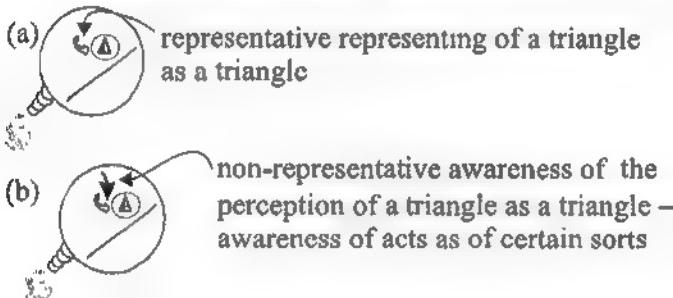


Figure 21

I think you will find that this theme is a clearly constant one in the history of philosophy. You see, why do we have a representative theory of certain mental acts? The idea was that we can't be directly related to certain items; the mind can't get out of itself. As Malebranche was to say, the mind cannot promenade among the planets. It cannot promenade in the external world; with respect to external objects, in the past, in the future, one has a representative consciousness of them (it may amount to knowledge or well-founded opinion). However, when it comes to what is going on in your mind in the present moment, they feel there is no point in having to represent it.

105. Why should you have to represent what is going on in your mind when it is just there to be grabbed, cognitively grabbed? It is to be seen, so to speak, with a kind of *illumination*. I think this is the view that you find in Descartes. It is interesting that, when we begin to look at Kant, even in Kant we will find a view according to which most of our consciousness of objects is representative, but when it comes to what is going on in the way of acts of synthesis, of what is going on in our own mind, when we are aware of them, it is by a non-representative awareness. I want to put this as one model because I can't say that Descartes ever explicitly distinguishes between representative and non-representative awareness. But, as we work through epistemological texts of the period, I think we will find ourselves very strongly tempted to say that most philosophers are drawing the distinction along the lines that I just characterized. Thus, with respect to other objects, we are aware of

them by representing them, but with respect to what is going on right now in our mind, we don't represent it, and we have direct awareness. There are two kinds of awareness. There is representative awareness and non-representative awareness, but they would both be cognitive in the sense that they would be representing items as being of a certain sort.

106. All I mean to do is to emphasize that the theory is that you are aware of every representative act and of every basic act, but that these awarenesses are not also actually objects of awareness which would generate the regress but simply that they are potentially so. Still, Descartes certainly wants to say that with all of our perceptions, with all of our cogitations including our sensations, we are aware. He thinks that we are aware, but the awareness of these acts is not as such representative and doesn't generate this regress.

107. Now as for Leibniz, we can be prepared to find Leibniz perfectly happy about not only representing something but representing our representing and representing our representing our representing. Leibniz wouldn't be as likely to be disturbed by that as Descartes. For Leibniz, what goes on in the mind is infinitely complex in many dimensions of infinite.

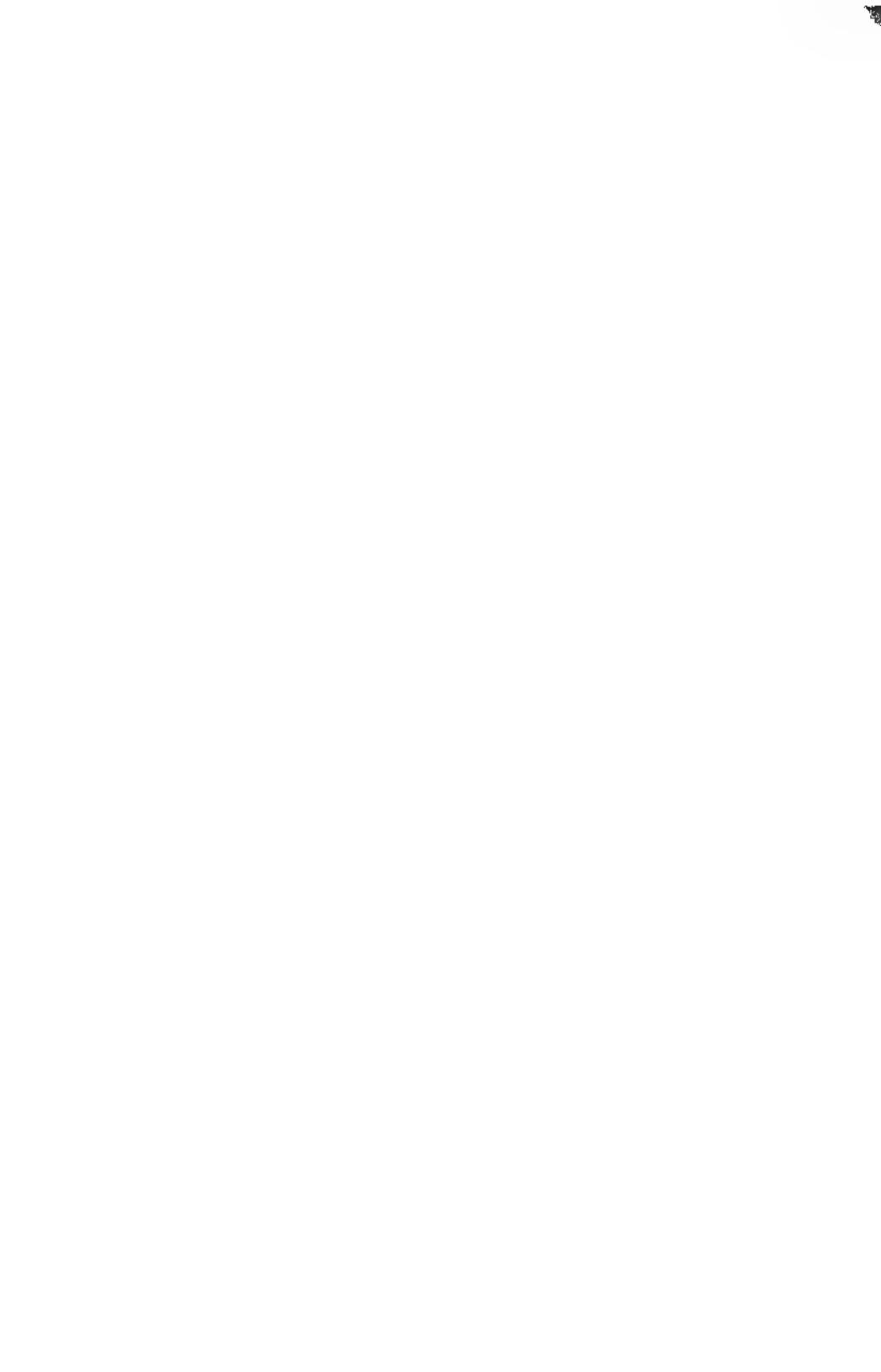
108. My suspicion is that Descartes is taking it for granted that when it comes to what is going on in our mind at the present moment we don't have to represent it. He is really concerned with our ideas and how our ideas give us knowledge of the world. Most of his discussion, you see, is of representative awareness. Similarly, most of the key problems that Descartes faces in this period concern the reliability of representative awareness: to what measure it can be counted on to give us a knowledge of reality as it is in itself? He is focusing his attention on this.

109. Descartes is very explicit in some passages that we are conscious of every representative act that is going on in our mind. Hobbes was himself particularly disturbed about this. You can give the analogy: somehow whenever you meaningfully utter a statement, you also have to utter the statement that you made the statement. We have to take very seriously the idea that this awareness, when you are aware of it, when you are aware of it in the way that Descartes really wants, you have to be aware of it as a representing of a triangle. Otherwise it wouldn't serve its purpose. It has got to be a classificatory awareness.

110. Consequently, we will have two kinds of a classificatory awareness: representative and non-representative. I gave you the rationale of that: why should you need to represent something that is right there in your mind at the present time? However, you have to take very seriously that it has to be not just some kind of non-cognitive awareness; it has to be, as I put it, a classificatory awareness, and that means that to us it has to have a truly propositional structure. Yet there is no developing of this in Descartes.

111. In Kant's case, when Kant is discussing his theory of synthesis, it is quite clear that what I synthesize are representations and that is to be understood in a sense which grows out of the Cartesian tradition. Still, he also thinks that you can pay attention to these acts of synthesis. It is quite clear that he hasn't explicitly

asked himself the question as to whether, when you are paying attention to the act of synthesis you have to represent the act of synthesis. This is one of the little places where Kant's transcendental machinery slips a little cog now and then. It is as though when it comes to your acts of synthesis, if you were careful and were asking the right question, you could just be aware of them in a non-representative way. Nonetheless, what synthesis constructs for Kant is representative awarenesses of objects, but that is a problem for later on in Kant.



## Locke

### *A. Concept formation*

#### (α) The continental tradition: causality

1. Concept formation: all our conceptual abilities—abilities to think of qualities, of relations, of kinds, to have sortal concepts, attributive concepts, however one wants to put it. We find, in the history of philosophy, one strand which stresses causality. A person has an ability to think of a certain character—let's say, has the concept of F. The problem is posed as to what causes us to have the concept. What brings it about that we have the concept? The stress is on the notion of cause.

We saw, for example, that in the platonic tradition, it is Forms themselves which cause us, in a very intriguing, puzzling mode of causation, to have concepts. F-ness (as part of a whole system) is the cause of our having an ability to think of things as F.

2. In the subsequent versions of the Platonic tradition where the essences or forms become thoughts in the mind of God, it is God that is the cause of our having the ability to think of things as F, to have the concept of F or F-ness.

3. Descartes, you will notice, in one of his arguments for the existence of God, lays great stress on principles about causation. The cause of a concept must have at least as much reality as what the concept is of. Everything must have a cause; the cause must be at least as real as the effect. Naturally, the cause of the concept must be at least as perfect as what the concept is of. He lays down a certain causal framework here.

4. It is interesting to note that the causal framework permits something other than God to be the cause of our ordinary concepts. He says that the cause has to be something at least as perfect as what the concept is of. So, if you had of asked Descartes, "How are we able to think of a mind?", one strand of his answer would be that we can think of a mind because we are a mind, as it were. We could be the cause of our ability to think of a mind.

5. Now actually Descartes puts forward arguments designed to show that in the case of most of the metaphysically interesting concepts, God has to be the cause of them because they implicitly contain some element of infinity; since the infinite is prior to the finite, God would have to be the cause of many concepts.<sup>1</sup> Still, the general principle is a permissive one which permits the cause of our ability to think of the mind to be the fact that we are minds.

6. As a matter of fact, he can even say this of the cause of our having the concept of pain. We have a feeling of pain and that causes us to be able to conceive of pain, to represent pain. God could be the cause of our concept of pain because the cause doesn't have to be the sort of thing that the concept is of. Remember the

<sup>1</sup>Earlier, Sellars remarked on the concept of the will; it would be such a case in addition to, say, existence and substance.

point of Descartes' argument is that only God can be the cause of our ability to think of God. Only an actually existing God can be the cause of our concept of God. But, in the case of other concepts, God doesn't have to be the cause of them, just something that ranks in a certain range of the order of perfection.

7. You should construe, for practical purposes, the concept of perfection, in Descartes, as a lineal descendent of the great chain of being. The idea is really that one item is more perfect than another if it is more self-sufficient: that is really the core of this notion. If you look at the examples that were given of perfection, what runs throughout the examples is the distinction between the more self-sufficient and the less self-sufficient, the more self-dependent and the less self-dependent. God is the most perfect being because God depends only on himself. Other things depend on God, and, furthermore, attributes depend on substances, etc., etc..

8. Again, material objects can come apart; since they don't go together as nicely as minds do, they are less perfect than minds. The theme is that the mind cannot fall apart. That is a theme that goes back to the *Phaedo*: the soul cannot perish by disintegrating. So, we should connect this notion of degrees of perfection, in many contexts, to degrees of self-sufficiency or degrees of independence. If we do so, we will tie into Spinoza because, for Spinoza, only substance is really self-sufficient. Everything else depends on substance.

9. All right, so Descartes would be perfectly happy (although he has a theory of innate ideas, ones that he thinks are innate like those involved in mathematics, metaphysics, ethics, and so on) when it comes to concepts pertaining to sensation, to say that we have the ability to think of blue and to represent items as blue because we have actually had sensations of blue. This wouldn't have been put, really, in an abstractionist manner; it is still looked at in terms of causality. That doesn't mean that something which isn't like what had been called abstractionism is not involved, but the continental mode in which concept formation was looked at is in terms of what causes the concept.

### (β) British empiricism: innate abilities and abstraction

10. I think it is worthwhile taking a look at the British empiricist tendency, as contrasted with rationalist tendencies, because one of the words that is constantly recurring in Locke is the word 'abstraction'. Locke, of course, says, in that long passage, that the mind occurs as a *tabula rasa*, like an erased blackboard. Now, of course, we know what Locke is referring to here: he is referring to the mind not being born with concepts. The mind doesn't have a nice tidy innate battery of abilities to classify and to think of things as having qualities and so on. So if we think of concepts as conceptual abilities to think of something as F, then, for Locke, there are no innate concepts.

11. But, of course, there are lots of things that are innate for Locke. The empiricist thought that the mind is born with a great many abilities. The abilities to compare, to notice, to abstract, to distinguish. Apparently, there are lots of innate

abilities; and, with respect to concepts, we are born with what might be called innate second order abilities, i.e., abilities to form abilities. Concepts are abilities of the first order; they are straightforward abilities to think of things *as F*. The concept of red is the ability to think of something *as red*. The concept of circle or circularity is the ability to think of something *as circular*.<sup>2</sup> What we are born with according to the empiricist (generally speaking) are second order abilities with respect to concepts. We are able to form concepts.

12. This is the old story of the difference between having the ability to skate and the ability to learn to skate. Some people have only the ability to learn to skate. People are not born with the ability to skate, but they are born with the ability, if they have the time, to get to a pond which is frozen over, put their skates on and so on. So that they have the ability to acquire a certain ability, the ability to skate. These are trivial, but important distinctions and they enable us to get certain topics in proper focus.

13. So the mind has kinds of abilities. And indeed first order abilities also occur at birth. Somehow, together with second order abilities, they make the ability to form concepts. Take the abilities, for example, to compare, notice, and abstract. These are just straightforward abilities; but by having these abilities, we have the abilities to learn to acquire the abilities which are concepts.

14. As you know, Berkeley sometimes talks as though the mind is the seat in which you have two kinds of mental acts—or “mental states” we better say because Berkeley is very leery about using the word ‘acts’ in connection with ideas. Notice that Descartes and others use the word ‘act’ in such a way that it has the Aristotelian meaning of *energeia* (act). By the time we get to this spot after the scholastic period, many philosophers tend to use the word ‘act’ in the sense of “conduct” or “action” in which a person does something in the sense of “does something purposely” (that would be an act). Berkeley uses the word ‘act’ in the sense of purposive action; therefore, he doesn’t want to call ideas as such “acts”. That’s just an interesting fact about how the technical terminology is changing and the scholastic terminology is disappearing.

15. Ideas are one kind of mental state. But then Berkeley, in addition to ideas, also has acts in the sense of—well, really, volitions. Naturally, Berkeley, like everybody else, also thinks that there are acts of comparing, acts of noticing, acts of distinguishing and so on: a rather indefinite list which is brought in without any real philosophical discussion of what these acts are like, what their status is, what interesting features they have as mental and so on. It is very annoying to someone who studies Berkeley with a sophisticated framework of categories pertaining to the mental to find how casually he talks about them occurring. What is it to compare?

16. I mean, Locke also says that we compare things. Immediately, you get the nice picture of someone comparing an apple and an orange. here is an apple and here is an orange. You can compare them: this is red, this is orange, this is round, this is an oblate spheroid. We have a good common sense notion of what comparing

<sup>2</sup>For further discussion on this theme see lecture 4, Rationalism and Empiricism, in ME (116).

is in terms of such examples. But what in the world does Locke mean when he talks about comparing? Well, nothing really is told us. So there is a whole battery of abilities which are innate—innate abilities to compare, to distinguish and so on.

17. He even talks about relation. There is a temptation in Locke to think of relations as brought about by the mind: you can "relate" things. Put a question mark there, a very puzzling notion. There is "compare," "relate," and then "abstract." One theme in Locke certainly is that we form our concepts by abstraction. From what?

18. Well, there are two things from which one forms concepts by abstraction. On the one hand, there is sense; on the other hand, there is reflection. He talks about the ideas of sense and the ideas of reflection. For our purposes right now, we can compare these: we can say that there are concepts pertaining to perceptible features of things and there are concepts pertaining to introspectible features.

19. All right, then, what other abilities are we born with? As I said, for Locke we are born with all kinds of abilities. We are born with the abilities to have sensations, to have perceptions: I will say, in general, abilities pertaining to sensation. But we are also born with the abilities pertaining to desire, to choose, what Berkeley would call the active abilities. Let us sum these up as abilities pertaining to desire.

20. Locke holds, then, that we have, innately, the ability to have sensations of red, or sensations of white. Locke was very fond of white. As an example, let's take the ability to have a sensation of white. The ability to have a sensation of white is not a concept. We get the concept of white by this process which involves what we call abstraction and that is what I am trying to put my finger on.

#### *B. Abstraction from actual cases versus separating out*

21. At any rate, we aren't born with a concept of white, but we are born with something with respect to white: we are born with the ability to have the sensation of white. This ability is actualized in sensations. The ability to desire is, for example, actualized in a desire; the ability to feel pain is actualized in feeling pain. We shouldn't construe these abilities as the abilities to have concepts, but they are abilities to have ideas. You see the word 'idea' is very much an accordion word. So if we have the sensation of white, that can be called an "idea" of white. To have a sensation of white is to have an idea of white, but, according to Locke, it is not an idea in the sense that pertains to thinking proper, to the level of the understanding. Nevertheless, as we will see, Locke brings the level of sensation and the level of understanding very close together.

22. In a way, he construes sense on the model of understanding. I intend to bring that out. But first of all, I want to approach this by successive approximations. One picture we might have is this: take this (Figure 1) as the ability to have a sensation of white that is actualized in a sensation of white. As I said, among the innate abilities of the mind are the abilities to compare, to distinguish, to relate, and to abstract. These abilities are somehow focused on this sensation or, perhaps, some

other sensations like this and somehow there comes to be in the mind the concept of white.

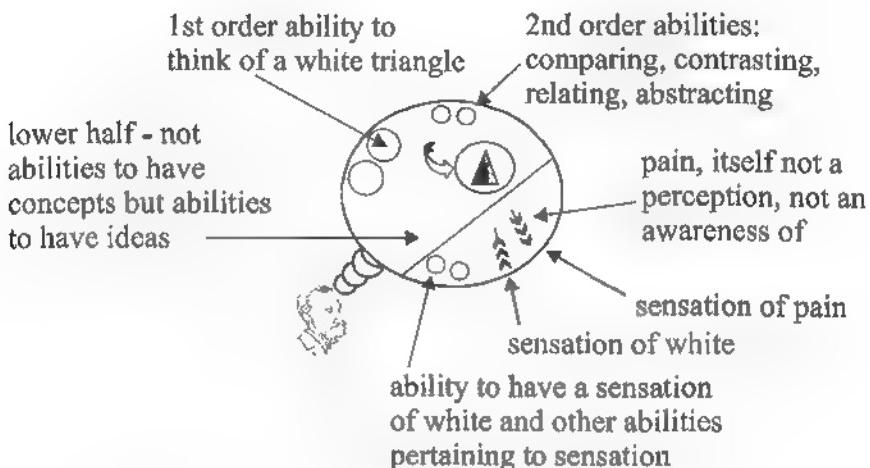
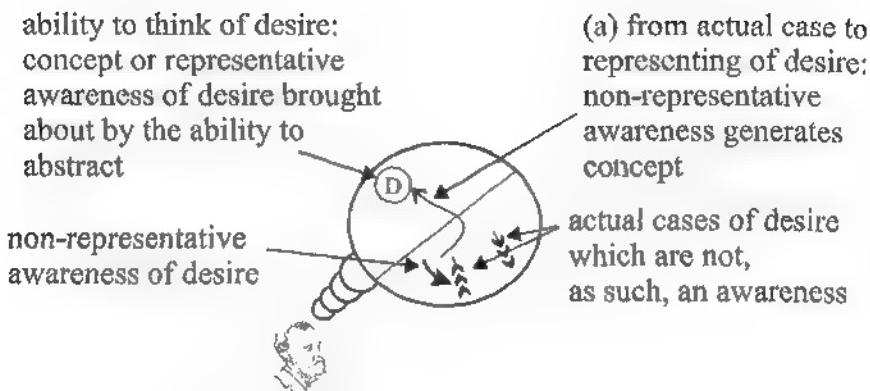


Figure 1

23. It is very important to realize (something that shouldn't be at all surprising) that there is an innate ability, for Locke, with respect to white. We want to understand the transition involved between this ability and the ability to think of something as white—how it gets into the understanding. However, there is a potential ambiguity lurking here. It really shows a certain incoherence in Locke and it is related to the incoherence I was talking about before.

24. To bring it out, suppose that we take an ability such as desire. Well of course, as Hume is to point out—everybody did, Locke and Descartes also—you can't desire unless you have concepts. So, the ability to desire can't be actualized unless other concepts have been formed: concepts pertaining to things that are appropriate, to things that can be desired.

25. I am not concerned with that feature. All I am concerned to point out is that this is an actual case of desire: the actualization of this ability is an actual *case* of desire. So, in this example here (Figure 2), to get the concept of desire, to get the understanding furnished with the ability to think of a desire, involves going from an actual case to the ability to represent. Of course, when you represent a desire, there need be no actual case of a desire. You can represent a desire which doesn't actually exist; intentionality comes in. But the interesting thing is that there is a mobilization of these basic abilities that the mind has focused, as it were, on actual cases of desire, thus generating the ability to think of desire. The ability to represent is grounded in some kind of awarenesses of actual cases. Clearly, then, here abstraction starts from *actual cases* and ends up with the ability to represent.



**Figure 2**

26. We are encountering the theme that I was developing earlier: these abilities involve, you might say, a non-representative awareness of desire in order to generate an ability to represent desire. That theme is an important one here when it comes to a certain class of examples. Given the abstraction, we see that it goes from a non-representative awareness of actual cases to the ability to represent. This actual awareness, this non-representative awareness, would go along with "comparing" and "noticing" and all those other mental acts which are not given much attention in the official theory. We have abstraction (as the combination of these acts) taking us to the having of the ability. Not much is said about it and it is talked about as if it were the same as another sort of paradigm (for Locke also has a quite different paradigm).

27. The thing is that here is a case of an actual mental state which we are aware of, and somehow there is formed from it the ability to represent that kind of state. I could have used the example of pain. You have a pain and then you notice the pain. When we compare it with other mental states, we arrive at the ability to think of pain. But, Locke doesn't really worry about that kind of example because, you see, always in the background there is the Cartesian theme: "well, if you have a pain, that is what causes you to have the ability to think of pain." This is in the causal tradition of concept formation.

28. Let us take another example. This again is, as I said, part of the method of successive approximations to the truth because I want to return to that diagram and point out a few things that have occurred. How might one come to have the concept, say, of a triangle? of an equilateral triangle? Leaving aside the question of size, it might be reached as follows. In addition to the ability to have desires, to have sensations of white, we have the ability to have a sensation of a triangle.

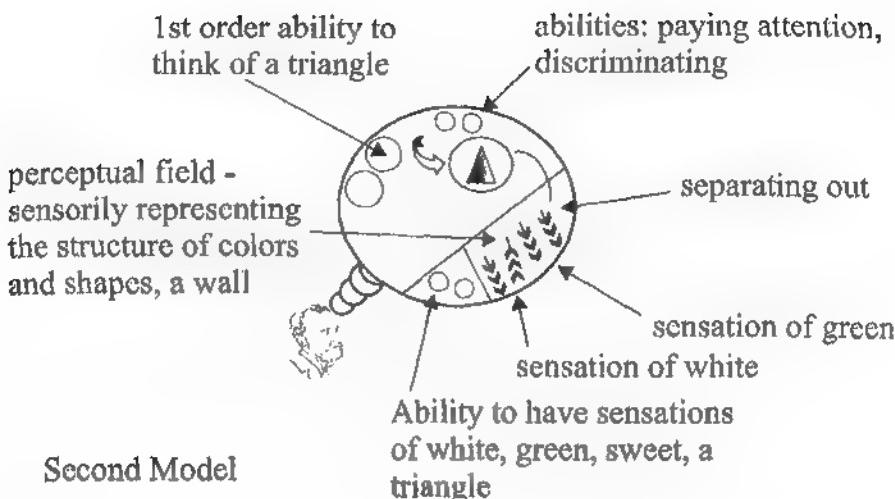


Figure 3

29. Here (Figure 3) is the ability to have a sensation of a triangle. You will notice right away that I have not put the emphasis on the simple and the complex. That is a separate theme and I am going to pretend right now that we don't, as it were, form concepts of lines, the concept of three and then put these concepts together into the concept of a triangle. I just want to set up a very crude theme to mobilize topics that I was discussing in connection with Descartes.

30. The ability to have a sensation is mobilized in the actual having of a sensation of a triangle. Now when a desire is an actual mental state (Figure 2), the mental state has the character of being a desire. Here (Figure 3) we run into trouble because the perception of a triangle is not a triangle. It is not an actual triangle. You see here, in this class of cases of abstracting (for example, a triangle), you do not go from an actual case to the ability to represent the case.

31. The triangle case is an interesting case where we go from a representing of a triangle to the ability to represent a triangle. That looks pointless because it looks as though when you have the sensation of a triangle, you were already representing a triangle—you already had an idea of a triangle because we can call the sensation "an idea of a triangle". So there would be, as it were, a kind of stuttering here. The mind already has the ability to represent a triangle. What point is there to a process of abstraction which generates the ability to represent a triangle?

32. The answer, interestingly enough, is that here a different model of abstraction enters in. Locke tells us that when we start from experience it's like William James' buzzing blooming confusion. When you have a sensation, you don't have just one. They come in a batch. You have the ability to have sensations of white, green, sweet, sensations of a lime; you have all these abilities pertaining to sense, but they are all tangled up with one another. They need separating out.

33. In this model (Figure 3), then, we have all these abilities pertaining to sense, but they get actualized in the whole perceptual field, in the sensory field, to put it crudely. We are using our act-content model; Locke himself offers us no neat model whatsoever. So, if we use our act-content model, we might say that these sensible abilities get actualized in one perceptual act in which we represent a whole structure of sensible qualities. From this point of view, concept formation starts from an ability to represent which is actualized almost globally in a whole field and, by means of other abilities—paying attention, discriminating and so on—acting on these contents, we *separate* out these components.

34. This is the second model. It is very important to see that both models are in Locke.<sup>3</sup> They are radically different but not clearly distinguished by Locke. The first one is that you have the ability to feel pain or to desire, let's say, and that is actualized in an honest-to-goodness actual case of desire and not a representing of desire—you are actually desiring. Here is a desire for a glass of water. Now that is an actual case of desire and not a represented desire for a glass of water. In this case, then, what abstraction does is to take you from an actual case of something to the ability to represent it. You have an innate ability to desire; but the ability to represent desire, i.e., to have a concept of desire, that is what is not innate. What you have is the second order ability to form that ability to represent by abstracting from actual cases. This is the first model of abstraction (Figure 4).

ability to think of desire:  
concept or representative  
awareness of desire brought  
about by the ability to  
abstract

abstracting from actual  
case to representing of desire

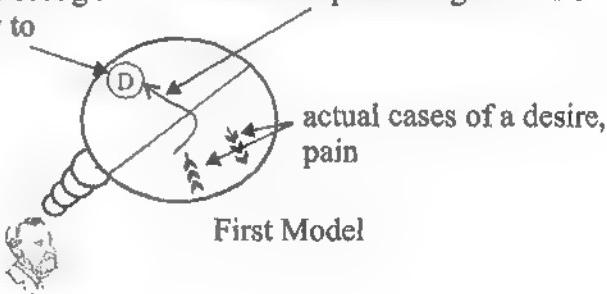


Figure 4

35. The second model is quite different. Here (Figure 3) is a case where you are sensorily representing the structure of colors and shapes—you are representing the corner of the room and the qualities pertaining to the blackboard. You are

<sup>3</sup>They are both in Descartes too, but Descartes' language often reveals which model he is using.

representing that corner. You have abilities to represent these various qualities, but when they are brought into play, they are brought into play globally. What abstraction does is to take you from these representings. You see this is a matter of representing: this is a represented wall, or rather a represented surface with a certain relation to other surfaces and so on. What we have here now is not a matter of going from actual cases as before but from *represented* cases of qualities. Abstraction takes you from represented cases to the ability to have separate representations.

36. You see, the mind is tied up with colors and shades of colors and sprinkles, and what abstraction does is to focus on a certain part of the content of representation. Then we get the concept of white, the concept of line and so on. As I said, there is a radical difference between the two models, but since Locke uses the word 'idea' so indiscriminately, you must really scrutinize the texts to see that there are these models.

### C. Some questions

37. Question: Is there mixed in here a further problem of how we get from the particular to the generic?

All these philosophers thought that if you have simple concepts, you can always put them together into complex concepts.

38. But there is Locke's problem of the generic. What about the abstract concept of a triangle, triangularity? That is abstraction in a different sense and he has even more trouble with that. The model here works fairly well provided you grant that at the sensory level we are representing items as of a certain sort. That is why it is very important to recognize that, right from the beginning for Locke, we are conscious of items as of certain sorts but in a kind of confused way: they are together with everything else. Strictly speaking, what goes into the understanding and what is characteristic of the understanding from this point of view is the ability to represent qualities by themselves as opposed to representing them in this large blooming scene.

39. There are other stages in Locke's doctrine of abstraction that we can consider. Here, I just wanted to bring out how much there is that is innate for Locke. If we take the desire model or the pain model, what is innate is the ability to feel pain or to desire, the ability to notice, to distinguish, and to abstract and these all make possible the transition from having desires to having the ability to represent desires. We go from the ability to desire to the ability to represent desire. On the second model, the case differs. We start out with the ability to represent. We have the ability to *represent* white to start with, but the trouble with our ability to represent white is, as I said, that it is actualized in a whole buzzing, blooming confusion of actualizations. On this point of view, abstraction consists in separating. So, what is characteristic of the understanding is the ability not just to represent white but to represent white by itself and, then, to combine that with other abilities if we want to represent a white horse and so on.

40. Question: What about going from the determinate to the determinable?

For Locke, I think the noticing which is relevant can indeed involve comparing. You see that is not what I am emphasizing. I am emphasizing not that it doesn't involve comparing, but that they are "comparings" pertaining to the contents of representations. We go from a representation of a togetherness to an ability to represent separately. Then, of course, once we get white, red and orange and so on, taking determinate shades of those, there comes the problem for Locke of how we can represent color as such. And that is a third case. He tries to handle that on the separating model.

41. I have been discussing the radical differences between two conceptions of abstraction and pointing out that there is an important difference between conceiving abstraction as coming from the contents of mental acts on the one hand, and, on the other, conceiving of abstraction as dealing with the actual formal reality of mental acts. For the Cartesian, the act has formal reality as an actually occurrent state. So, in this case, we go from actual existence to concepts while in the other case of abstraction, we go from representative existence to the concept of a triangle. We start with the concept of a determinate kind of triangle and go from that content to concept whereas in the other case, we go from actuality to concept.

42. In one case, the metaphor is that of separating out and forming the ability to represent the triangle just by itself: granted that you already have, at first, the ability to represent the triangle along with the ability to represent countless other things—color and all the sensory contents. Abstraction is forming concepts by separating out to get the ability to represent things separately. Locke is just full of innate abilities to represent but, you see, you don't have any concepts because concepts, for Locke, are abilities to represent separately. Here you represent white snow and white milk: we have these perceptions and then by paying attention to each (noticing), we form the ability to think of white as such.

43. These two models are not clearly distinguished by Locke, alas, because there are certain questions that Locke has not clearly asked himself. These are the two models: Locke doesn't clearly distinguish between them and we will see that Hume doesn't clearly distinguish between them. Hume's account of ideas and impressions is vitiated by similar problems.

44. Question: The ability to desire is simply an innate ability. It presupposes that you already have concepts because you can't desire without desiring something?

You have an innate ability to desire just as you have the innate ability to pay attention, to distinguish, to notice differences. There are many innate abilities that you might have: you might have the innate ability to feel pain. Locke is full of innate abilities. But then his problem is what is the relation of concepts to experience? We have the abilities to have all kinds of things go on in our minds and he is interested in how we form our separate concepts: the concepts of line, the concept of point, the concept of white. So, given all the innate abilities, his problem is how do we get out concepts.

45. For the empiricists, we have a fantastic complex of abilities. We have all these innate abilities which are mobilized by this initial mass of perceptions. One of the paradigms is the contrast between simple and the complex.<sup>4</sup> How the complex get put together out of the simple is often just smoothed over. It is just taken for granted that if we have these simple abilities, somehow complex abilities are no problem. Yet, we know that the story is much more complicated than that. Locke is very cavalier about it: we have the innate abilities to represent all kinds of things, to be adverse to something, to desire, and innate abilities to abstract. As a result, his problem with respect to concepts is: do we have to say that our concepts are innate? But notice the richness, all the innateness in the context that he poses his very specific questions.

46. The paradigms are mathematical. He argues that the concepts of mathematics can be accounted for in terms of abstraction from the representations which we have the innate ability to have. He just takes for granted the ability of the mind to form a sensory representation of blue. Over there, look at the other side of the room there: the mind is born with the ability to represent that kind of complexity of shape and color and so on. But that isn't having the concept. To have the concept you have to be able to represent the shape, the color, just by itself. Think about sheer rectangularity: it is in having the concepts that we locate our abilities to think. These concepts can be put together to form complex concepts.

47. Locke has a lot to say about putting simple concepts together to get complex concepts because that is what he is really interested in. He is interested in the concepts of science and mathematics and the problem is "how do we get the concepts of science and mathematics?" We get them from experience. We have the abilities to experience, the abilities to describe and form the simple concepts and then we can put them together. That is the simple model. His attack is on the Cartesians and on the Platonists who had argued that scientific and mathematical concepts are simply innate. He wants to grant that abilities to represent are innate, but not concepts.

48. Locke has a lot to say about the understanding and how the complexes are formed, but the part he takes for granted is very casually treated. He never explains how, from the ability to represent white and the ability to represent a triangle, we have the ability to represent a white triangle.<sup>5</sup>

49. In this period, there is no clear awareness of problems. Locke writes as though to think of an individual is just to think of infinite complexity. The individual is the most complicated. There is no clear account, in Locke, of what it is to represent an individual. Representing an individual is just to have a very complex representation. Locke has taken for granted that we have the abilities to have

<sup>4</sup>One of Sellars' favorite characterizing slogans for the empiricists was "take care of the simple and the complex takes care of itself" Their favorite mode of combination was "conjunction." Sellars' remarks provide the background for the slogan.

<sup>5</sup>The criticism is generalized to apply to theories of knowledge in *ME*. Locke's problem becomes enshrined in the reluctance of mid-twentieth century philosophers to explain how the parts of complex facts make up the complex.

sensible representations. Then from these by abstraction, we form concepts and then out of the simple concepts we form complex ones. You have the concept of a circle and the concept of a triangle and somehow you can form the concept of a triangle inside of a circle. The mind puts everything together to form complex concepts of complex qualities. But at the level of the real problems, there is no discussion in Locke.

## Historical Setting in the Spinoza Lecture: beauty, love, the intellect, and individual immortality

### A. Aristotelianism and Platonism

In order to understand Sellars' interpretation of Part V of Spinoza's *Ethics*, Spinoza's philosophy must be put in historical context. Sellars invokes a historical tradition that locates the *Ethics* in the intersection of salvation (beatific vision) and immortality. From this perspective, he dismisses contemporary critiques of Spinoza's determinism and philosophy of mind. According to Sellars' view, careful attention to the historical context, doing philosophy historically, is never more essential than in the study of Spinoza. In characterizing Spinoza's project, Sellars says,

The problem, then, that really arises and that is central to Spinoza's theory of immortality is, "in what sense can there be a clear idea of oneself as an individual?" (Appendix, Spinoza, ¶21)

To appreciate what Sellars has in mind, we must first say a little about what the background historical tradition is. The tradition is the Renaissance synthesis of Aristotelianism and Platonism.<sup>1</sup>

When we begin the study of the Platonic-Aristotelian tradition, almost immediately it becomes clear that a simple chronology of works will not get us far. The tradition of explanations divides into extremes: Aristotelians on the one side, Platonists on the other. As each of these opposing positions, in turn, became the measure of interpretation for an age, a simple linear representation of the evolution of the metaphysics of immortality became impossible. Add to this the fact (which seems remarkable to us) that much of the tradition saw no conflict between the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle, and one begins to get the idea that a simple story about "progress" in the development of the metaphysics of immortality is likely to be elusive. In fact, it is an astonishing story told with the twists and turns appropriate to an elaborate mystery.

Of all the giants of Greek philosophy and, indeed, all philosophy, Aristotle historically has exerted more influence on academic philosophy (the philosophy of the schools) than anyone, including Plato. Plato's free flowing, tempestuous and poetic style never had the institutional popularity of the dogmatic, severe, disciplined Aristotelianism. Plato's influence on the tradition is, one might say, expansive and diffuse; the influence of Aristotle is focused, formal and totalitarian. Where Plato inspired passionate adherents and global idealizations, the Aristotelian regi-

<sup>1</sup>Key issues are identified in APM (¶9-12) (in this volume). Sellars took the historical background for granted and aside from nominal references to Arabic or Medieval philosophy, he rarely spoke about the texts at this time in his career.

mented knowledge into formulas and categories. What the Platonists found liberating, the Aristotelians regarded as degenerate. If Platonism served as a stimulant for the awakening Renaissance understanding, Aristotelianism served as its systematic organization. In Spinoza, as Sellars' lecture subtly illustrates, the Platonic and Aristotelian traditions, entwined from their origin, emerge as one philosophy and not two. Yet, they come to us through traditions that totally separate them in their historical evolution.

Oddly, Plato, the teacher, has provided sanctuary for philosophical dissidents fleeing the despotic academy. The philosophical insurrections that influence Spinoza—the Alexandrian, Judaic, Arabic, Ibero-Judaic, Ibero-Arabic and Christian-Neoplatonist are all, in one way or another, Platonic.

Complicating matters, through the centuries a powerful crosscurrent of imposters had taken up Plato or Aristotle under the guise of the philosophers themselves. They paraded themselves as Aristotelians while philosophizing as Platonists or vice versa. But what is important here is that as far as concerns the history of philosophy, those like the pseudo-Aristotle, author of *De Causis* (that brought Proclus' brand of Neoplatonism to the Scholastics) are as important as the real one; the Plato synthesized by the Alexandrines as prominent as the real Socrates; the Neoplatonized Aristotle of the Ibero-Judaics indistinguishable from the real one.<sup>2</sup> By the time the imposters were unmasked, it was too late to make a difference. Both Plato and Aristotle have passed through such an astounding series of transformations, one is struck by the longevity of the core doctrines. Again and again, their systems emerge to provide innovation and creativity.

No matter the extent of the Aristotelian systematization of metaphysics, we cannot ignore the fact that we arrive at Spinoza by a road that bore fruit among the Alexandrines: Plotinus and Proclus. Ideas finally reach us through the Ibero-Judaic, and the Ibero-Arabic philosophical traditions that stretched across Europe with the expulsion of the Jews from Spain. The contemporary idea of a radical opposition between Plato and Aristotle did not exist. The tradition was syncretistic with the Aristotelians dominating in logic and physics, the Platonists in metaphysics and theology.

#### B. Plato

In the lecture on Descartes, Sellars remarks,

Plato develops—in a kind of story, a kind of prototheory—a theory of how the mind comes to be able to deal with the forms, to have these forms as objects to be concerned with. ... It is also part of a whole religious conception of man's place

<sup>2</sup>The Alexandrines include Philo, Plotinus and Proclus (and others). We cannot forget Pseudo-Dionysius, author of *De Divinis Nominibus*, that reaffirmed (much later) the Platonic aesthetic vision of love and beauty within the context of mystical revelation and, consequently, fueled the religious passions of the Scholastics in a way that the Arabic theosophists never could. The confusion surrounding the authors of key texts like *De Divinis Nominibus* survives to this day.

in the universe... . From our point of view, it is a kind of prototheory of how the mind comes to be able to cope with the forms as its objects. (Appendix, Descartes, ¶18)

Plato's prototheory develops into a theory of perception and thought:

The key thing to appreciate for understanding later developments is that, according to Plato, just as the object of perception plays a causal role in perception so, in intellectual life, an object of intellection plays a causal role. ... Thus, triangularity is the cause of a perception that is to be regarded as an intellectual perception and construed as a state of the soul. (Appendix, Descartes, ¶13)

The notion of "causality" is key:

It's a very interesting kind of causality here, the notion of something which does not change the forms. The forms clearly do not change; they are not active, they themselves do not exemplify events, processes, or so on. And yet they are responsible for it: it's a very abstract theory of causality. According to Plato, just as in perception there is the sun which provides the light which cooperates with the visual ray and makes possible sense perception, so the form of the Good (which is the analog in the realm of the forms to the sun) plays a similar role in making it possible for the mind to perceive triangularity, i.e., represent it. (Appendix, Descartes, ¶17)

The Platonic prototheory became the subject of a tradition that gradually removed the veil of myth and drama within which it was cast.<sup>3</sup> The ingredients that Plato adds to our understanding of Spinoza are the perceptual metaphors of aesthetic vision (seeing the beautiful), and the sensual metaphors of love and desire (the directedness of love)—metaphors that quickly gave way to the metaphors of intellectual perception (mental vision) and the intentionality of thought (directedness of cognition).

### C. Plotinus

Plato introduced Plotinus to the role of "contemplation" as the activity by which the mind ascends from the sensory to the spiritual— drawn, as it were, by love of the Beautiful and the Good.<sup>4</sup> Plotinus' contribution to the genre of philosophy that develops into Spinoza's concept of *amor intellectualis* (Appendix, Spinoza, ¶39f) is his treatment of contemplation.

<sup>3</sup>Take, for example, an account of concept formation from the *Symposium*: "When a man has been thus far tutored in the lore of love, passing from view to view of beautiful things, in the right and regular ascent, suddenly he will have revealed to him, as he draws to the close of his dealings with love, a wondrous vision ..this is the final object of all those previous toils...so that, in the end he comes to know the very essence of beauty." *Symposium*, 211, tr. W. Lamb (Loeb Library, 1967)

<sup>4</sup>See *Symposium*, 210-212.

As a result of being championed by Plotinus, the role of Plato's Good and the type of causality involved in understanding become dominant features in metaphysics by Spinoza's time. Thus, correct understanding of Spinoza depends not only on studying Plato and Aristotle, but also on understanding the Alexandrian school of Plotinus.<sup>5</sup> Without understanding Plotinus, it is not possible to understand anyone who speculated about love and immortality in the Early Modern period. Notwithstanding, Plotinus is not a person who belongs to the study of immortality, salvation or epistemology in any contemporary sense, rather he tends to the tradition that deals in causality, exalted spirituality, and a devaluation of the material. Plotinus is the philosopher of

mysticism (those who seek union with the divine),  
 illumination and emanation (the causal devolution of all things from one, true cause), and  
 the system that aims at establishing (through contemplation) a direct relation between the individual soul and the divine.

All of Plotinus' energy is directed towards unifying what is divine in a person with what is divine in nature. What he tries to orchestrate for us with his abstract treatment of causality, i.e., mystical harmony, is the doctrine of the beautiful in itself, elevated beyond created things.

In effect, Plotinus embraces the teaching of the *Symposium*, the teaching that the mind, through its own contemplative activity, is lifted through successive levels of immateriality and spirituality to union with the immovable and fixed forms. To our amazement, we find that "contemplation" is not merely guided intentional action for Plotinus, it is the central reality itself. The distinction between the contemplative act, object, and agent, blur and, in contemplating the forms, by the very exercise of the act, the mystic attains real existence. The notion of real existence becomes inverted—the intelligibles, i.e., the forms or ideas, *these* are real and not our familiar tables and chairs.

One begins to see that what appears in Plato as poetry, Plotinus converts into dogma: the Socratic irony disappears, the veil of myth falls, and in its place appears the image of the One from which all things flow. Yet, the evolution of the Platonic theory has just begun. The Plotinian One is, after all, nothing like the divine will: it does not "will" the existence of created things, does not sustain them in existence, nor is it something that could create in its own image.

Sellars remarks:

Plato stands alone in the history of philosophy for holding that the forms are

<sup>5</sup>We have to begin with two books of *Enneads*, those which deal with beauty and general, *Ennead I*, book six, concerning the beautiful and *Ennead V*, book eight, concerning intelligible beauty. Without tracing the influence of Plotinus, it is not possible to understand Pseudo-Dionysius, Avicenna, Gersonides or Abrabanel—philosophers who figure prominently in the traditions familiar to Spinoza.

independent of mind. As soon as Plato shuffled off this stage, a different theory which is closely akin to this, but radically different in one respect, took over. That is the theory according to which the forms exist in the mind of God. This is the view which dominates the Platonic tradition. In Plato, the form of the Good is not in a mind. There are gods and there are minds, but that's it. For Plato, God himself just represents the forms; even god's thinking is representative. (Appendix, Descartes, ¶22)

Sellars compresses a good deal of history into Plato's shuffling off the stage but the point stands. Once Plotinus' Plato is recast within a somewhat alien theological idiom, all ideas are derived from the divine understanding; felicity and the state of beatitude consist in the eternal contemplation of these very same archetypes. "Knowledge at its best," as Sellars would say. Transcendent objects of intellection play a causal role in bringing about intellectual perception but they do so by drawing the contemplative mind to them. The model remains perceptual but develops to accommodate the lines of both a "vertical" and "horizontal" causation. "Vertical" in the sense that, ultimately, all activity of the knowing mind and the intelligibles is grounded "higher up" in God and "horizontal" in the sense that the refined prototheory must be able to explain perception in terms of the potentialities and actualities of minds and perceptible objects:

Now what happens to the realm of ideas is that it becomes the intellect of God. That is not a simple notion, for it involves many complexities as we will see later on in Descartes.

...instead of triangularity being the cause of our ability to think of triangularity, it is God which is the cause.

Before, in Plato, it was the illumination of minds by the forms themselves. Now it is the illumination of the mind by God. You can see how metaphysicians were a little more comfortable with this: even Plato was worried about how a form could act on a mind. But God was the source of immanence as we all know. So, one felt more comfortable about saying that God is the cause; after all, God is a person and if anything is to be a cause, it's persons. So, God is the cause of our ability to think (to have a concept) of triangularity. (Appendix, Descartes, ¶24-27)

Naturally, one must admit that the influence upon the genre within which Sellars locates Spinoza cannot be reduced to a unique source. It comes from the Neoplatonists, both Christian and not, where the esthetic vision, i.e., intellectual perception, found its most influential expression in the idea of emanation and divine revelation.<sup>6</sup> Lacking an account of forming concepts (from eternal and immutable forms) but committed to the Aristotelian view that in knowledge the knowing mind becomes like the object, Plato's view of love (adoration or desire directed toward

<sup>6</sup>Scholastics used the *De Causis* (*The Book of Causes*), and *On Divine Names* of Pseudo-Dionysius routinely. These works form a central part of their Neoplatonic heritage. *The Book of Causes* reinterprets Proclus along lines consistent with divine revelation.

a beloved) is mobilized as a metaphor for the way thought "strives after" its object.<sup>7</sup> As a result, the "affective" side of thinking, i.e., the sheer presence of a cognitive state, comes to be used to explain the "guidedness" of attention. When the Neoplatonists identify this cognitive "presence" with the vital presence of the godhead, the gap between the divine and the mystic falls away. The rich sense of "contemplation," as the central reality, and the affective aspect of cognition add another ingredient to our understanding of Spinoza's background.

#### D. Avicenna

Long after Plotinus, in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, Avicenna (Ibn Gabirol), author of the *Fons Vitae*, reawakens Platonism and inspires the Mediaeval philosophical tradition.<sup>8</sup> Avicenna's version of the chain of being, fundamentally pantheistic, informs the Ibero-Judaic philosophical genre that will surround Spinoza.<sup>9</sup> The logic of universals, if I may speak this way, becomes the fabric of ontology—a fabric constituted by the realms of vertical and horizontal causation. The truths or laws that constitute the structure of the intellect also constitute the complex economy of the micro/macrocosm.<sup>10</sup> Thus, although Avicenna continues to rely on the affective aspect of cognition to tie it to the divine presence (as the Neoplatonists had done), he adds apprehending interrelationships between natures as an ingredient in pursuit of immortality.

Additionally, the dynamic role of love as the wellspring of the tendency toward unity (or the Good) emerges from the shadows. Without it, the path to ultimate transcendent knowledge is unobtainable:

All things desire goodness and feel pleasure when they receive form, all substances move toward the One ... all desire the goodness of the primary being ... What is the proof that all movement is desire and love? ... Desire and love are the search for union with the One...as a being ascends and approaches the source of unity, the more it will be unity and endure beyond time ... for the soul that is able to arrive at the final end and becomes spiritual, divine, and feels joy because it is

<sup>7</sup>Literally, the Latin, *intendere* is "aspire after," "aim at," "strive after"

<sup>8</sup>The *Fons Vitae* has invited comparison with Spinoza's *Ethics* for centuries. Avicenna begins by pointing out that (a) our end is to seek knowledge, (b) self-knowledge allows us to know all things through ourselves, (C) through knowledge our soul is released from the bonds of materiality (*Fons Vitae*, Book 1, section 2).

<sup>9</sup>Indeed, Avicenna's hierarchy of being would tend toward that of Plotinus were it not for his substitution of the thesis of a divine will for the impartial Unity of the Alexandrians. If we use Sellars' dispositional analysis of essence (APM, §§3-9), we can say that the laws implicitly constitute essence by being the systematic unfolding of a nature at every level of the micro/macrocosm (including the intelligible realm). See *Fons Vitae*, book 2, section 3. While the terms "matter" and "form" are Aristotelian, he treats them like the hypostases of the Alexandrians and uses a relative of the process that they use to move from the simple and one to the multiple and composite.

<sup>10</sup>On analogy with sensible structure in sensible perception, reason grasps the intrinsic character of the intelligibles, i.e., the forms, and their interrelationships (similarity and difference) (Book 2, sections 3-5).

close to the perfect will, that soul rests and continues in joy.<sup>11</sup>

In the final section (V, 43), in a manner reminiscent of Spinoza (*Ethics*, V, 42), Avicembron addresses the benefit of tracing knowledge of substance and form to the total cause: "What benefit can we derive from this study? Liberation from mortality and union with the source of life." In the *Fons Vitae*, the apprehendable connection between natures takes center stage and adds yet another ingredient to our interpretation of Spinoza.

### *E. Abrabanel*

The greatest impact of the Renaissance tradition upon those writing in the Ibero-Judaic genre (that includes Spinoza) comes from Abrabanel. Within an Aristotelian framework, Abrabanel provides the most complete, original and profound exposition of the Platonic theory on love, immortality and salvation. However, the dialogues of Abrabanel are less a product of academic circles than they are the accumulated knowledge from a prohibited culture. A culture at once demanded and despised that remained devoted to philosophy even during the relentless persecution of the Middle Ages and the Counter-Reformation.<sup>12</sup>

On the Aristotelian side, in Abrabanel's rich conceptual framework, understanding requires the grasp of universals—the most real ingredients in the world-process (see *APM*, ¶22). On the Platonic side, joy, blessedness, pleasure and,

<sup>11</sup> See *Fons Vitae*, book 5, sections 32-35. This discussion, as is typical of this genre, is contained at the end of the *Fons Vitae* (V, 43) as well as at the end of the Spinoza's *Ethics* (V, 42).

<sup>12</sup> The philosophy of Abrabanel is the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle with roots in mysticism and the cabala yet, without invoking the myth and allegory found in Pico and Pico de la Mirandola. In Abrabanel, one finds an echo of a tradition of Ibero-Arabic philosophy that displays a character and texture developed over centuries of collaboration among the diverse cultures that came together in Mediaeval and Renaissance Spain. Abrabanel is a Judeo Neoplatonist from a tradition that goes back to the Judaic Hellenists of Alexandria. It is not difficult to find these theories in his work because the work of the Ibero-Judaic community from the 11th and 12th century was already Neoplatonic thanks to Avicembron, just as it was Aristotelian thanks to work of Maimonides. Later, during the 12th century, in accommodating the Aristotelian combination of the "abstractive" theory of thought with a causal theory of sense-perception (see *APM*, ¶31), Avempace (Ibn Bajjah) and Tofail (Ibn Tufayl) emphasize that to arrive at the union with the agent intellect, one needs rational analysis. Their influential doctrines reinforce a kind of intellectual mysticism: rationalistic in the way they perceive and mystical in their aspiration and goal. Tofail tends toward, roughly speaking, pantheism in the sense in which theosophists of the period tended to be. For a discussion of the reasons that could give comfort to the theosophists, see *APM*, ¶52. The preoccupation with *individual* immortality, barely hinted at in Avicembron, takes center stage in Gersonides. See Seymour Feldman's translation of *The Wars of the Lord*, BK 1, "Immortality of the Soul." Sellars (*APM*, ¶34) generalizes the problem: in what sense can *any* individual be said to play a causal role? The problem arises as a result of adopting the "orders of dependence" described in *APM* ¶8-12. The issue becomes exacerbated in the context of personal immortality as a result of the theory of the active and passive intellect (or the related distinctions between agent, conjunctive, material and acquired intellect). See also Abrabanel's discussion in *Dialogos de Amor*, Dialogue I, or p. 45 of Friedeberg-Seeley's translation *The Philosophy of Love: by Leone Ebreo*.

ultimately, love, provide an account of the phenomenological character of guidedness of thought. The "of-ness" of thought, under the phenomenological aspect, the *feeling* of the of-ness of thought, so to speak, is construed (a), on analogy with the way loving "tends towards" the beloved and (b), the grasping of "Ideas" in immediate mystical apprehension.<sup>13</sup>

Looking at an object through the eyes of Abrabanel demands the possibility of grasping its structure, physical and metaphysical, in all its meaning, in its harmony and proportion to all other things. In intellectual love, the mind "sees" the structural harmony in composition and derives complete pleasure when it grasps the reasons for harmony, its realization and its inner operation.<sup>14</sup>

"Does the beatitude and the ultimate end of the human intellective soul lie in divine union?" inquires Abrabanel.<sup>15</sup> The question is not posed against the backdrop common to theosophists who teach that ascension can be achieved without doing science. Earning personal immortality, freedom and the beatitude of ultimate wisdom occupy center stage.<sup>16</sup> The ascent to union, by intellectual love, takes place from the initial grasp of a beautiful object to the final and perfect union with the first and true beauty of the Idea (the form) in the divine mind. The painstaking detail of Abrabanel's dialogue, like Avicenna's, scarcely conceals the implicit "*more geometrico*" so characteristic of the Platonic side of the genre. The geometrical paradigm manages to dominate the intellectual scene.

The story is a familiar one: as a science, geometry was thought to work by first apprehending elementary geometrical objects and relations and ends by apprehending necessary connections between geometrical kinds "forming a tight system" (*APM*, ¶27). Thus, through a similar process, Abrabanel describes how one comes to "see" a consonance, proportion and harmony of nature and essence in the return to union with the divine wisdom. In Sellars' terms, as applied to Spinoza, one achieves immortality as one attains a theoretical understanding of an object *sub specie aeternitatis* (Appendix, Spinoza, ¶28-30). The necessary connections among geometrical kinds become, on the road to our union with the divine, synthetic

<sup>13</sup> In this tangle, one sees the tradition that recognizes the birth of the state of consciousness as such. See Abrabanel, *Dialogos de Amor*, III (in Seeley, p. 400). For an interesting entry into the notion of immediate intuitive apprehension, see Simon Van Den Berg's Averroes' *Tahafut Al-Tahafut*, volume II, note "p. 14.2.". His discussion of γεῦσις, "taste" in the theosophists and Neoplatonic tradition, is germane to the point. The "Hebraic" Spinoza refers to in P7 are, no doubt, writing in the genre under consideration. In the Ibero-Judaic tradition, the "active intellect," or "agent intellect" was identified with God (Abrabanel, Dialogue I, or Seeley, p. 46). Abrabanel has a robust botanization of the intellect; see Dialogue III, or Seeley, p. 324).

<sup>14</sup> See Abrabanel, Dialogue III (in Seeley, p. 400). He pays considerable attention to spelling out the Aristotelian and Platonic character of intellectual love (and its place in concept formation). Abrabanel recognizes that intellectual love cannot be an affection but "we have no other words for it" and construes it on analogy with the sensual pleasure of the sensitive soul but properly thought of as the character of the very unitive cognition of pure intellect with intelligible beauty, Dialogue III (in Seeley, p. 456).

<sup>15</sup> Abrabanel, Dialogue III (in Seeley, p. 266).

<sup>16</sup> While already present in Gersonides, the idea that salvation isn't easy takes on a new urgency in Abrabanel.

necessary connections between natures:<sup>17</sup>

The understanding of the greatest craftsman imprints its pure and most beautiful Idea containing every essential grade of beauty in the bodies of the universe, with a multitude of beautiful essences graduated in diverse degrees. In our intellect...it is represented as multiform united beauty...the more excellent the intellect which receives it in actuality and clarity, the greater is the unity of this multitude; the greater unity causes the greater beauty of the intellect and brings it closer to the first and true beauty of the intellectual Idea which is in the divine mind.<sup>18</sup>

Abrabanel reconciles Plato's and Aristotle's views of concept formation. The scaffolding provided by the schemes of vertical and horizontal causation—ultimately no more than the divine artificer imposing perfection, harmony and order—allows for the possibility of a theory of salvation (blessedness) for the mind willing to climb the scaffold. The ingredients are in place: aesthetic and intellectual vision, contemplation, the connection between natures, the affective aspect of cognition. It is up to Spinoza to put them together.

Moral principles and scientific theories are inextricably linked. Spinoza's highest degree of knowledge, the degree that comprises the transcendent unity with the divine, reveals the constitutive causal structure of reality—the great benefit of which is, Spinoza tells us, salvation:

Blessedness consists in the love of God, a Love which arises from the third kind of cognition (*Ethics*, V, P42)

The spiritual "joy" of love—the sheer presence of experiencing ourselves as part of the infinite fabric of the universe—defines the moral point of view. As Sellars indicates at the start of the lecture, the characterization of this experience gives us insight into what Spinoza means by 'idea'.

<sup>17</sup>The third-order realities, including causality, are described in *ME* (116), p. 177. The mode of connectedness in the hierarchy of thing-kinds (see *APM*, ¶9-11) as emanations (from the One to the Many) consists of irreducible levels. Thus, one develops the metaphor of a system of vertical causation (between levels) and horizontal causation (within levels) to visualize the vital, living universe (the microcosm and macrocosm). Love and strife (in the Empedoclean sense) provide the motive force, the good and the beautiful or the bad and ugly (in the Platonic sense) provide the reason for movement (either vertically or horizontally). Naturally, the vertical ascent is the path of salvation. Personal freedom, as Sellars indicates in *FD* (60), can be built into the conceptual framework. Spinoza does so by treating causal laws pertaining to acts of mind as higher-order necessary connections (*ME*, p. 177), independent of deterministic first-level connections.

<sup>18</sup>Abrabanel, Dialogue III (in Seeley, p. 409).



## Spinoza

### A. Again: ideas versus other mental acts

1. My aim here is to follow through on some comments that I was making in our discussion last time. As usual, one of the key problems with these philosophers is to understand exactly what they mean by 'idea'. But nobody is as careful as they should have been with respect to what is, or isn't, an idea. This theme I brought out in the Berkeley-Descartes paper.<sup>1</sup> It seems as if many of the relevant categorial distinctions were left out.

2. Let's go back to Locke.

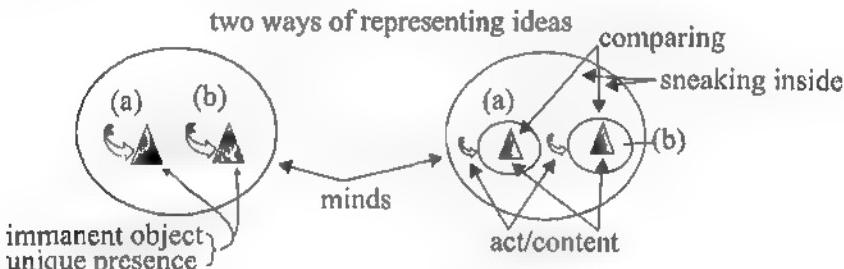


Figure 1

Here is a mind for Locke (Figure 1, right). On the one hand, you have ideas, like the idea of a red triangle, a perception of a red triangle. However, according to Locke, as I indicated early on, there are such things as "noticings" and all these nice mental activities which are not ideas in the original sense. Here, (a), is an idea of a red triangle; here, (b), is an idea of a green triangle. The idea of a red triangle is not triangular, as we have seen: it is an idea of a red triangle. Now, let's say that we are comparing them: that involves some kind of ability to "sneak inside" the idea.

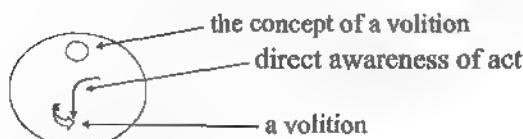
3. Or, if you use the other metaphor for idea or model of presenting ideas<sup>2</sup>, then there is an unique way (figure 1, left) in which red, and green, and triangular exist in the mind; and there is an activity of comparing. Yet, the "comparing" is not an idea. So all these philosophers really take for granted the kind of raw material for knowledge which consists of ideas and then some kind of mental acts concerned with ideas which really are not themselves ideas.

4. But then, of course, there is another ambiguity which comes in here. This act of comparison—this is not an idea or a matter of ideas, but yet we can have an idea of it. Of course, there is a temptation to think that anything you have an idea of is, in some sense, an idea.

<sup>1</sup>BD (95) reprinted in KTM (118).

<sup>2</sup>The immanent object model—a precursor of the adverbial model.

5. Let's take Locke's theory of ideas of reflection.

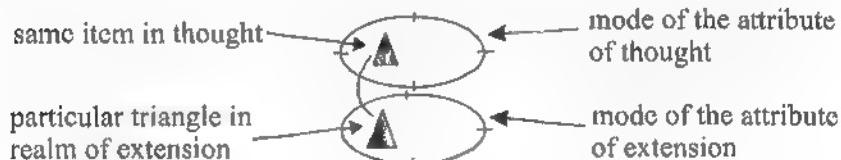


**Figure 2**

Here is the mental act (Figure 2) of volition (or whatever—it could be choice, love, hate, or so on). Then there is such thing for Locke as forming an idea which somehow involves an awareness of the mental act, leading one to have the concept of volition. This concept is (in its uses in thought about volition) a matter of ideas in the sense involving intentionality. But there is this special type of direct awareness which is always smuggled in here. I illustrate this in terms of Berkeley in the Berkeley-Descartes paper, but you will find it endemic to the period.

#### B. God; thought and mind; truth

6. Okay, let's develop a little background. According to Spinoza (Figure 3), God has aspects (and here I'll represent the infinite by means of a solid circle because I am not concerned with problems of time here; that's a separate issue).



**Figure 3**

The point is: here is the infinite mode of the attribute of thought and here is the infinite mode of the attribute of extension. (I am representing something as limitless by means of my finite diagrams). The mind will represent a triangle of a certain shape and size in the realm of extension. The item (that we can represent in this way in Figure 3) exists in thought. We can say that it is the same nature, triangle—and not only that, but it is a particular triangle, an individual triangle and it, of course, is a modification of the attribute of extension—that exists as an element in, an ingredient in, the infinite face of the universe.

7. Naturally, God has a thought of everything. God is omniscient. Spinoza takes it for granted. It is built into his system because thought has to have an object and the primary objects of thought, you see, are spatial objects. Thought has to have an object; it has to be about something.

8. Why can't God simply have thoughts of things that don't actually exist? Spinoza answers that by saying: extension is a possible attribute of God; God has

all possible attributes; therefore there is a domain of extensions. There are extended objects. Consequently, Spinoza gives his proof of the existence of the physical world very early on. For example, we find his proof of its existence in Proposition 14:

it follows in the second place that extension and thought are either attributes of God or modifications of attributes of God.<sup>3</sup>

Spinoza gives this as a proof of the external world.

9. Now again, given that the physical world is unique, there is not only a physical world but God has true thoughts of it because everything that is possible, physically possible, exists in the domain of extension and God has a thought of everything physically possible. In general, here (Figure 3) is the idea in the mind of God which is the idea corresponding to this attribute. We can also put this in terms of act-content, but then we run into exactly the problem that it looks as though God had many acts whereas in a sense, as Spinoza wants to emphasize, it is by one act of thought that God grasps the whole world. This is the theme that we are discussing.

10. Here is the human mind and here is the human body (Figure 4). Again, abstracting from time, here are thoughts in the human mind of every modification of the human body.

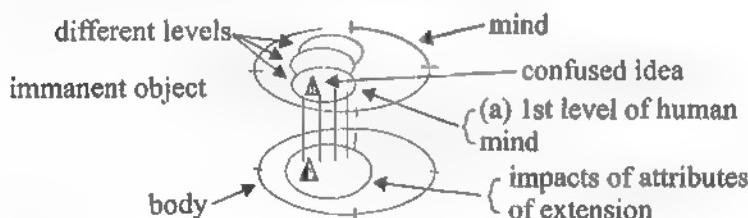


Figure 4

Notice that the relation between ideas and physical objects is essentially the relation of truth. Putting it in modern terms, it's the semantic theory of the mind-body problem: a relation like that between an immanent object (content if you will)—being of something—and then something that actually exists.

### C. Confused thoughts

11. Here (Figure 4) is the human mind: this, (a), is the first level of the human

<sup>3</sup> Ethics I, P14, corollary 2, 51. Sellars gives a gloss of the text found in *Ethics* edited by James Gutman (Hafner Publishing Co., 1957). Page references are to Gutman's edition on occasions when the lecture refers to specific passages, or otherwise to Gebhardt's edition *Spinoza Opera* (vol 2, Heidelberg: Carl Winters, 1925) in the form: *Ethics* I, P14, corollary 2, 55G for "Ethics, part 1, proposition 14, corollary 2, page 55 followed by 'G' for Gebhardt" (or 'H' for Hafner).

mind. Of course, it is in the mind of God. I mean, God not only knows what is going on in the world of extension, he knows everything that is going on in the attribute of thought, in the immanent, infinite case of thought. We can build this aspect up as high as you like: these are still ideas. At the level of confused thought at least, all the modifications of the human body involve the impact of other aspects of extensions. They can be understood only as parts of a system in terms of which you have causation—physical causation. Further, you can understand the effect only by understanding the cause. So, the idea that the human mind, as such, has of any modification of this body is confused because, as Spinoza tells us in the second part, when he was talking about confused knowledge, he was talking about the first level (you should read proposition 28):

These ideas of modification in so far as they have reference to the mind alone...

(that's a quote from Proposition 28)

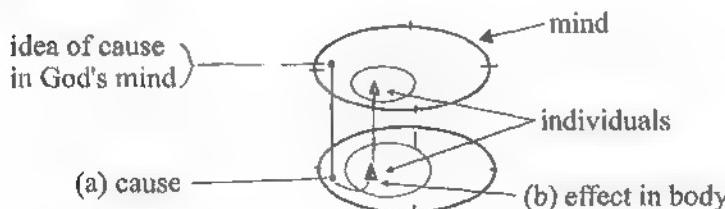
are like consequences without premises,

(there's a very key sentence, that is,)

as is self-evident are confused... .

To have an idea of a conclusion without having the idea of the premises from which that conclusion follows is, he says, "as is self-evident to have a confused idea."<sup>4</sup> So these ideas at that level of the human mind are all confused.

12. But, of course, God has the whole picture; so, God has the premises. Thus, these same ideas which in the human mind *as such* are confused because they are ideas which don't go along with ideas of the premises are, in God's mind, clear because God has the premises. God's mind includes, ultimately, the idea of everything.



**Figure 5**

This, (a), is the cause and this, (b), is the effect of that cause in the body (Figure 5).

<sup>4</sup>Again, a gloss on the text that reads, "These ideas of modifications, therefore, in so far as they are related to the human mind alone, are like conclusions without premises, that is to say, as is self-evident, they are confused ideas." (*Ethics* ii, P28, 104H) Compare also P29.

So, this is the result of an interaction in the external world of bodies. Well, God not only has the idea of this effect, but in God's mind there is also the idea of the cause.

#### D. Common notions

13. Notice that this is all at the level of the ideas of *individuals*. However, this is not the only kind of cognition that goes on. The crucial thing is that we can think of universals. Indeed, Spinoza is very careful at this point. Spinoza uses the word 'universal' in the scholastic sense, to talk about genera and species like man, horse, cow, etc.. When he is attacking the scholastic doctrine of universals, what Spinoza argues is that these are really functions of the imagination.<sup>5</sup> We do not have a real understanding of what a cow is. We simply have a complex of images as to what cows are, a kind of system of images—cow-images, let's say. Consequently, when Spinoza is attacking universals, he is not attacking universals in the modern sense; he is attacking a very specific theory of universals, namely, one which, according to Spinoza, really puts them in the imagination. As far as concerns Spinoza, we can think of universals in another sense: he doesn't use the word, but we can think of *the common*.<sup>6</sup>

14. It is interesting to note, you see, that the term for universal is 'the common'. What he really attacks are genera and species.<sup>7</sup> The word 'universal' really means *the common*. But Spinoza takes his usage of "common," when he speaks of "common notion," from the Stoics; it goes back to their use in geometry. So, Spinoza's common notions are an extension of this use: the paradigm case is the characteristics dealt with in geometry. He has extended this just as all philosophers since the time of Plato have done.

15. For Spinoza, then, there are common notions. Common notions are carefully distinguished by Spinoza from universals, or universal notions. He attributes universal notions, in the scholastic sense, to the imagination. Now, common notions, on the other hand, are notions that are involved in the basic principles of geometry and metaphysics. As I said, in the modern sense, they are universals; they are triangularity, straightness, shortness, things like that.

16. To get a key insight into Spinoza, all we need to do is to say that, in addition to first level ideas, there are intellectual acts whereby we deal with those ideas.<sup>8</sup> It is exactly as it is in Descartes you know: you can compare ideas; you can see what is common to them (Figure 6). In other words, as I said about Locke, if you have an idea of a red triangle and you have the idea of a green triangle, you can compare them; you can "notice" what they have in common. Well, Spinoza holds *exactly* the same view.

<sup>5</sup> *Ethics*, ii, P40, note 1, 110H.

<sup>6</sup> Spinoza does use the term elsewhere; see for example, *Ethics* ii, P37, 109H, also, P38, P39 and P40

<sup>7</sup> See *Ethics* ii, P40, note 1, 110H.

<sup>8</sup> For example, in comparing sensory ideas or images, as Spinoza points out in *Ethics* ii, P40, note 2, number 3, 112H.

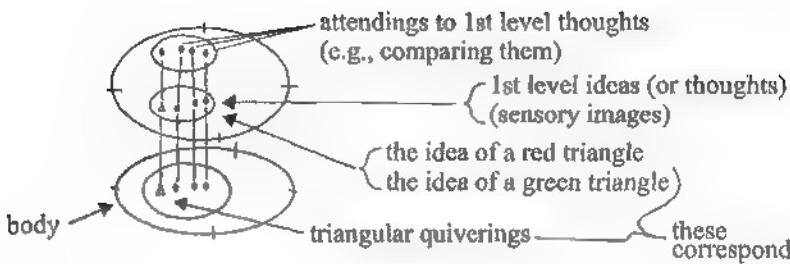


Figure 6

#### E. The common in the individual; second level knowledge

17. What, we may ask, is the basic Aristotelian principle behind this? A basic Aristotelian principle is that we see the common—that is, the universal in the non-pejorative sense—only in an experience of an individual, only by having a phantasm, as the Aristotelians put it, by having an *imagination*, if you will, or sensation, of the individual. There is no such thing for the Aristotelian as simply an abstract awareness of triangularity which is separated from the imagination of a particular triangle. Once you understand that, you have the key to Spinoza, because the second level of knowledge deals with the *content* of these ideas.

18. Assume you are having vibrations of your pineal gland—or, shall we say, the relevant parts of your body—which are triangular, triangular “quiverings” so to speak. Then, here (Figure 6) is an idea of a red triangle; here is an idea of a green triangle. According to Spinoza, there is the activity of comparing them, of finding what they have in common. When you do that, you are getting the notions of line and of point and getting the principles.

19. We see truths about these common notions, about these characteristics, in our imagination, in our sensory “ideas” of individuals. Sometimes Spinoza is willing to call these ideas too; everybody in the period was willing to call them ideas. You have to remember that, for the Aristotelian, the awareness of what it is to be a triangle is essentially involved with what it is to be a triangle in a particular experience, imaginative or sensory, an experience of a particular individual triangle. We start with first level thoughts.

20. I am calling them first level thoughts because there are other levels of thoughts, but these are, in some way, rooted in the first level thoughts which he calls “ideas”. There is in addition to what we’ll call sensory ideas and images, other thoughts that Spinoza takes for granted: these philosophers never come out and say, “in addition to these ideas, we must distinguish...”. Nobody was careful about this. We’re careful about it today, somewhat, but it is still not clearly understood how the word ‘idea’ is used in a kind of “fence straddling” way. Sometimes it was used as an equivalent to “thought” and, in that case comparing (noticing) is an idea. Okay.

21. Well, what am I getting to? Let's take a look at God's mind (Figure 7).

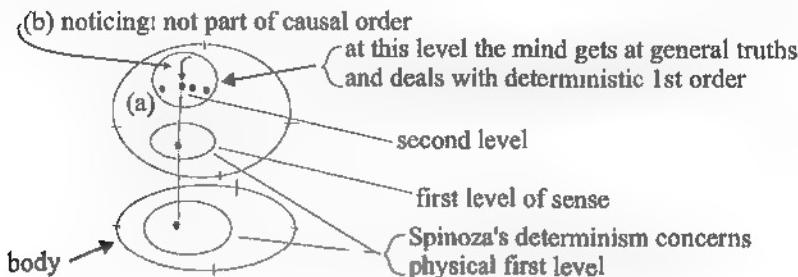


Figure 7

We can take this, (a), to be an aspect of God's mind. But, there is also an aspect of the human mind, that is, the human mind in so far as it deals with what is common gets above the level of confused ideas. God has clear and distinct ideas of individuals as such. The problem, then, that really arises and that is central to Spinoza's theory of immortality is, "In what sense can there be a clear idea which would be, nonetheless, in some sense a part of the human mind and be of one's self as an individual?" That's what I want to culminate with if I have time.

22. Anyway, the point is that there is a level of thinking which deals with the content of our sensory ideas and with common features of them (Figure 7, (b)) and is able through that (in the Aristotelian tradition) to deal with general truths like the axioms of geometry, the axioms of metaphysics.

23. Spinoza never really explains how we come to have the idea of substance. I think that he would put it this way. Since these sensory items are modifications of substance, then every idea of them somehow implicitly contains the idea of substance. Thus, in addition to dealing simply with common features, we can somehow deal with implicit features and bring them out. That is an Aristotelian view, too. The intellect not only deals with phantasms of individual things in terms of shape, size, color and so on, it somehow can deal with them as features of substance. So, the idea of substance can be brought out as a kind of implicit feature of all of these contents.

24. In any event, Spinoza doesn't worry much about that because, again, the Aristotelian tradition was quite explicit on that. At this level (the second), the human mind can deal with geometry, physics and metaphysics. But it is always having to deal with—what? The content of one's sensory ideas. Furthermore, these belong to a deterministic order. Thus, we might say that these sensory ideas occur these sensory images occur—as part of a deterministic order and are a function of the order of causation at the level of the physical because our images are also ideas of bodily states (Figure 7).

25. Well, now, suppose we reflect on a point that I brought out in my paper on

Aristotelian philosophies of mind.<sup>9</sup> This is a problem that the Aristotelians faced and Spinoza faces, but Spinoza does a beautiful job with it. He makes it explicit and he is the first one who did this. Suppose that a mathematician wants to go through a proof. The question is, for example, what is the area of a triangle? In order to go through that proof, what does he have to have, if you're an Aristotelian? He has to have the relevant imagery! Yet, what imagery you have is a function of your bodily states. That means that to go through a proof, you have to have the appropriate sequence of images. The sequence of images will provide the content for the successive steps of the proof. What does this mean? It means that the body has to be amenable, you see.

26. Most people just don't understand what is going on when Spinoza tells us that the more things that one's body is able to react to in the world, the better one can have knowledge at the second level. Let's see which theorem this is. Oh, yes, here it is:

That is useful to man which so disposes the human body that it can be affected in many modes, or which renders it capable of affecting the external objects in many modes, and the more so according as it lends the body more apt to be affected in many modes and to affect the bodies; so on the other hand, that is harmful to man which lends the body less apt for this.<sup>10</sup>

This is one echo of that theme. The point is that, according to Spinoza, the mathematician has to have a body that is so brought up, so to speak, that it will have the appropriate bodily states so that it will have the appropriate images for the proofs that it wants to go through. Indeed, that is, as I said, a nice theme for Spinoza to emphasize. The mathematician has to have a body that is appropriate so that he will have a sequence of images as culminating by drawing diagrams. If you prove something, you have to draw a diagram; your imagery has to occur in the right way.

27. Thus, when Spinoza is talking about the body being apt as an essential condition for having salvation, he means you have to have a body that is so disciplined that it has the proper sequences of physical states to be represented in imagery. Because, then, the thinking can deal with that imagery and see the necessary truth of it (Figure 7). This passage flows directly from the Aristotelian tradition.

28. Okay, so right from the Aristotelian principle we always deal with the common, and see general truths, in particular cases. And this together with the notion that imagery consists of ideas of bodily states, forces him to hold that the body of a mathematician is so disposed that his brain, roughly, will be in the right

<sup>9</sup>"Aristotelian Philosophies of Mind," (APM, 5), reprinted in this volume.

<sup>10</sup>The text of *Ethics* iv, P38, 217H is: "That which so disposes the human body that it can be affected in many ways, or which renders it capable of affecting external bodies in many ways, is profitable to man, and is more profitable in proportion as by its means the body becomes better fitted to be affected in many ways and to affect other bodies; on the other hand, that thing is injurious which renders the body less fitted to affect or be affected."

states to have the appropriate imagery so that there can be these "noticings." Yet, the interesting thing is that Spinoza never really faces the question as to whether these noticings themselves occur in the causal order. After all, his determinism essentially concerns the physical and therefore the first level. So, in a certain sense you see, there are activities of thought which are not themselves ideas but which are activities of the mind, activities in the true sense, not passivities. That is a crucial distinction for Spinoza. Those acts which deal with the common features of what is here, these act are themselves not part of the causal order (Figure 7).

#### *F. Higher level knowledge; immortality; individuality*

29. It is interesting to relate this to the Platonic and Aristotelian theories of the sense in which the mind is in touch with all of the essences. I discussed that in this paper.<sup>11</sup> Thus, if the body is appropriate, then there are appropriate images, and therefore there can be demonstrative knowledge of the second level. What we have to notice, then, is that in God's mind, at this point, there is an idea of an individual and it is a clear idea of an individual: every individual in all its individuality. The problem is, "How are we to get anything like that?"

30. After all, roughly speaking, Spinoza's theory is that the more of the second level and third level (which I will be discussing in a moment) our mind has, the more it approximates to God's idea of ourselves and the more we are immortal.<sup>12</sup>

31. If a person simply lives in the level of sensings, then there is nothing in him that is immortal. Furthermore, in so far as he deals with purely general truths, there is no *personal* immortality. I mean, there is nothing *personal* about geometry; there is nothing personal about abstract metaphysics. But, according to Spinoza, if we have an adequate metaphysics, we can also conceive of ourselves as somebody belonging to such a system and, furthermore, we can conceive of ourselves as that individual that was in certain states.

32. In other words, this enables Spinoza, roughly, to hold that we can have general ideas of individual states of affairs and see them as distinct from the sensory ideas of individual states of affairs. Consequently, we can have, but not merely on the level of geometry and metaphysics and so on, scientific understanding of particular events.

<sup>11</sup> APM, ¶38.

<sup>12</sup> The road to immortality is, Sellars argues, given by a recipe for attaining higher levels of knowledge. For Aristotelians, *De Anima* 3.4.430a: 14-25 begins the issue of immortality, as they saw it, the passage states that the active intellect is, in some sense, immortal.

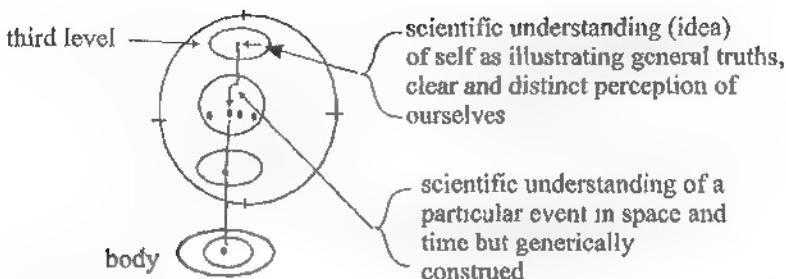


Figure 8

Clearly, that scientific understanding involves the application of a theory to ourselves as finite beings and that is why it is very important to look at the final part of the *Ethics*.

33. This comes to a head in part V; look at proposition IV:

There is no modification of the body of which we cannot form some clear and distinct conception.<sup>13</sup>

That means, according to Spinoza, our clear and distinct understanding of things is not limited to generalities. We can have a clear and distinct understanding of something as an illustration of generalities, and we can think of it as localized in space and time.

34. Spinoza so uses the word 'memory' that memory is a matter of the imagination. Thus, there are two kinds of grasp of our history we can have. That grasp of our history which is completely confused is a matter of memory. Yet, we can also have an intellectual grasp of ourselves as having had a certain history. As a result, according to Spinoza, we can have an incomplete, to be sure, and schematic grasp of ourselves as individuals. Indeed, we can have this at the *third* level.

35. You see the second level is simply concerned with generalities. What is the third level? The third level is looking at the individual in the light of these general truths. Therefore, we can have, at the third level, an incomplete idea of ourselves as individuals.

36. Indeed, according to Spinoza, to the extent that we have an understanding of ourselves as individuals, we have an understanding which is already in the mind of God because God has a understanding of us as individuals.

37. Moreover, this complete understanding of ourselves as individuals is something which is in God *qua* eternal. As I pointed out, according to Spinoza, the more we understand ourselves through the third level of knowledge, the more of us is immortal, and this means, for Spinoza, that the more of us as we exist in time

<sup>13</sup>The proposition (Part V, P4, 256H) reads: "There is no modification of the body of which we cannot form some clear and distinct conception."

exists eternally; our mind, then, exists eternally.<sup>14</sup> Our temporal mind exists eternally to the extent that we get to the third level of knowledge, i.e., seeing ourselves *sub specie aeternitatis*, i.e., seeing ourselves in our individuality as illustrating general truths. That is Spinoza's theory of immortality.<sup>15</sup>

38. Many philosophers have thought of immortality as a matter of God's remembering. I mean, that is a common theme that you all run into. You are immortal because God remembers you. To be non-immortal is to be forgotten by God. If you depended on human beings, everybody would be mortal. Many philosophers, Paul Weiss, Alfred North Whitehead and so on, had the idea that you are immortal in so far as a consciousness of you and your individuality exists in the mind of God. Well, you can see now what Spinoza is saying: he is saying the more you get to a clear and distinct understanding of yourself as an individual, the more you are immortal, the more you, as you exist in time, also exist in eternity.<sup>16</sup>

39. The rest of his theory of salvation consists in distinguishing between pleasure and blessing. We use the word 'pleasure' so that anything that is a matter of satisfaction is something that we draw pleasure from, but the classical tradition was to distinguish between mere pleasure, *titillatio* (boo!), and satisfaction (hurray!).<sup>17</sup> Or, at least, the classical tradition distinguished pleasure from active satisfaction. In addition, you must remember, according to Spinoza, God feels enjoyment. God enjoys the world because he is active. Similarly, according to Spinoza, we feel pleasure insofar as we are passive, but we feel true enjoyment insofar as we are active.<sup>18</sup> Thus, it involves this subtle distinction between simple pleasure and blessedness which is conceived of hedonistically but in a non-pejorative sense. Consequently, as far as this life is concerned, we are blessed in so far as we are active. Moreover, activity for Spinoza, like all philosophers really, consists in doing geometry, doing metaphysics, and then seeing oneself *sub specie aeternitatis*.

40. What is going on when we have a clear and distinct conception of our-

<sup>14</sup>In addition, we free ourselves from bondage in the Augustinian sense, or, as Spinoza points out in V, P6, 258: "In so far as the mind understands all things as necessary, so far has it greater power over the emotions, or suffers less from them."

<sup>15</sup>Once again, we see the striking echoes of Aristotle that Sellars finds in Spinoza. Spinoza's beautiful phrase appears in, for example, Part II, P44, corollary 2: "De natura Rationis est res sub quadam aeternitatis specie pereipere" (it is of the nature of reason to perceive things under a form of eternity). The phrase appears again in the key propositions 29 and 30 of part V where Spinoza spells out the liberating features of this intellectual vision.

<sup>16</sup>As in the other cases, Sellars finds an Aristotelian-flavored theme at this point. It reminds one of the end of the *Nicomachean Ethics* where Aristotle claims that the more a being possesses real contemplation (*theoria*), the greater its happiness (*eudaimonia*) (X, viii, 8).

<sup>17</sup>In Aristotle, for example, we see this when *eudaimonia* is distinguished from simple pleasure, and in the *Ethics*, Part III, P11, note, where '*titillatio*' pertains to the mind-body unity, as it were (149G)

<sup>18</sup>In the *Ethics*, Part III, P11, note (149G), Spinoza remarks, "By 'joy' (*laetitia*), then, in the following, I mean the passion by which the mind passes to a greater perfection." In this sense, it differs from active (or perfect) happiness, that is, *beatitude activa* (*beatitude*) for which we have no English equivalent except 'blessedness', a word that does not catch the active flavor of Spinoza. *Beatitude* (blessedness) as the love toward God (arising from third level knowledge) pertains to the mind in so far as it acts (ad Mentem, quatenus agit, referri debet), Part V, P42, 308G, cf. also, III, P48.

selves is also going on in God.<sup>19</sup> Now remember, according to Spinoza, love is pleasure, originally with the idea of cause, but then he generalizes this: love is blessed enjoyment with the idea of a cause. So he tells us that, in the end, thinking is satisfactory, is a blessedness. It's a part of the mind of God. Thus, the love whereby we love ourselves at the third level of knowledge is a part of the love whereby God loves Himself. So Spinoza makes a very coherent system. I just wanted to pull some of the things together there.

41. Amaral: The clear and distinct idea of a particular in space and time you attribute to the third level?

Yes, that is the third. You see, the third concerns the individual again. The first is concerned with the individual but confuses it; the second is concerned with generalities (you know, geometry, arithmetic, metaphysics). And then the third is concerned with the individual again. The third is the level in which you see the individual in the light of the clear and distinct general knowledge you have obtained by using common notions. As I said, once you understand Spinoza in the Aristotelian tradition many things fall into place which philosophers have just kicked out into the dirt. Okay, that's it.

<sup>19</sup>Sellar's will now bring in the theme from P37, part V in which Spinoza brings together the virtuous person qua virtuous and God's self-contemplation (in something like the *beatitudo contemplativa*).

## Leibniz

### A. Individual substance and individual concepts

1. In the *Discourse on Metaphysics*, section eight, Leibniz says,

In order to distinguish between the activities of God and the activities of created things we must explain the conception of an individual substance... . In the first place since activity and passivity pertain properly to individual substances (*actiones sunt suppositorum*) it will be necessary to explain what such a substance is. It is indeed true that when several predicates are attributes of a single subject and this subject is not an attribute of another, we speak of it as an individual substance, but this is not enough, and such an explanation is merely nominal. We must therefore inquire what it is to be an attribute in reality... .

Notice that already he is working with an ontology in which an individual substance can have an attribute and that attribute can be modified in a certain way—and these are not to be conceived of as abstract entities—so that you can have modifications of modifications and, in principle, modifications of modifications of modifications. Let me remind you: acceleration is a modification of velocity, velocity is a modification of motion, motion is an attribute of a thing; that is the sort of picture that you should use. Roughly, we are speaking of the acceleration, velocity and motion as being, in a sense, as individual as the thing of which they are directly or indirectly predicated. He says,

It is indeed true that when several predicates are attributes of a single subject and this subject is not an attribute of another...

- Well, that implies that there are cases in which one attribute, as it were, can be an attribute of another. That is a theme with which I shall be dealing shortly when I start drawing my metaphysical diagrams.

2.

Now it is evident that every true predication has some basis in the nature of things, and even when a proposition is not identical, that is, when the predicate is not expressly contained in the subject, it is still necessary that it be virtually contained in it...

Now that is a nice, broad, accordion-like word, ‘virtually’.

and this is what philosophers call *in-esse*, saying thereby that the predicate is in the subject.

Notice that he uses "predicate" often here and in this context, in the material mode of speech as we would put it, for an attribute; so he is not talking about propositions here.

Thus the content of the subject must always include that of the predicate in such a way that if one understands perfectly the concept of the subject, he will know that the predicate appertains to it also.

3. Of course, you must always bear in mind the theological background according to which certain things are not doubted.

This being so, we are able to say that this is the nature of an individual substance or of a complete being, namely, to afford a conception so complete that the concept shall be sufficient for the understanding of it and for the deduction of all the predicates of which the substance is or may become the subject.

Now then, he is not talking about what all beings can do; he is talking about what can be presupposed by any systematic metaphysics of knowledge. He is talking about God's knowledge. God has a concept of every individual, that you must not forget. As a matter of fact, God has not only a concept of the actual individuals that make up this world, God has concepts of individuals in other possible worlds and even possible individuals in possible worlds. Hence I argued in the paper<sup>1</sup> that this is one of the sources of Leibniz' conviction that a coherent interpretation of what it is to have a perfect concept of anything involves that the concept be sufficient to distinguish it not only from actual things but from any possible things. Of course, this is true only in the case of God's concept, not in the case of our concept.

4. Leibniz is not talking about our concepts save indirectly. He is saying, roughly, a judgment that we make is true if, in the corresponding judgment that God makes, the attribute signified by the predicate is an element in the individual concept which is the subject of God's judgment. So, if we judge, let's say, that Socrates is wise, to take a simple example to start with, then it needn't be true that the concept of being wise is included in our concept of Socrates. The concept of being wise needn't be one of criteria of being Socrates—it certainly wasn't one of the local Athenian criteria for the term 'Socrates'. When we judge that Socrates is wise, the attribute of being wise is not contained in our concept of Socrates. But such judgments are true only if, roughly, in God's judgment that S is W ("W" stands for an attribute; "S" stands for an individual concept), that attribute is contained in the subject. So, there are three things that you have to keep separate: the human judgment, God's judgment, and what is ontologically true with respect to existence (Figure 1).

<sup>1</sup>In *ML* (57) ("Méditations Leibnitziennes"), section VII, reprinted in *PPHP* (102).

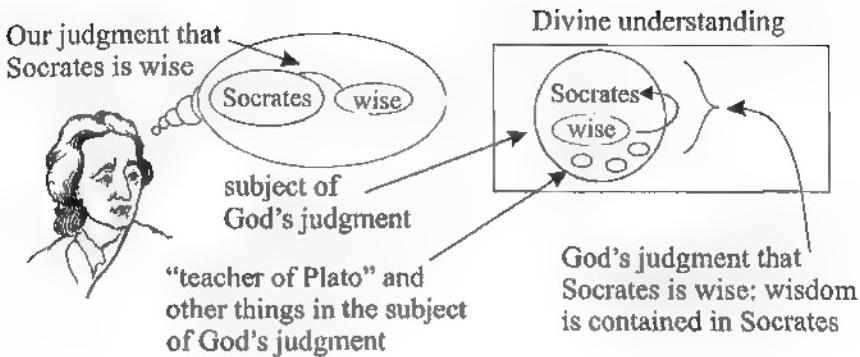


Figure 1

5. In the case of our judgment, the predicate is not contained in the subject. Leibniz never held it was. But, he is saying, however, when we use the word 'Socrates' or think of Socrates, we are thinking of an individual in this world which we pick out by certain criteria—"the teacher of Plato" and so on. Now, corresponding to this, of course, is God's judgment that Socrates is wise, and God's criteria for being Socrates are legion. God's criteria for being Socrates include everything that Socrates did and all the characteristics that Socrates had; "being Socrates" is infinitely complex. This is an infinitely complex individual concept.

6. Let us consider another level. Right now, however, I don't want to get into all the hassles about the way time comes into it. Perhaps later on I can say something about time and its close analogy with space. Anyway, here is Socrates (Figure 2): I will give him a little temporal spread.

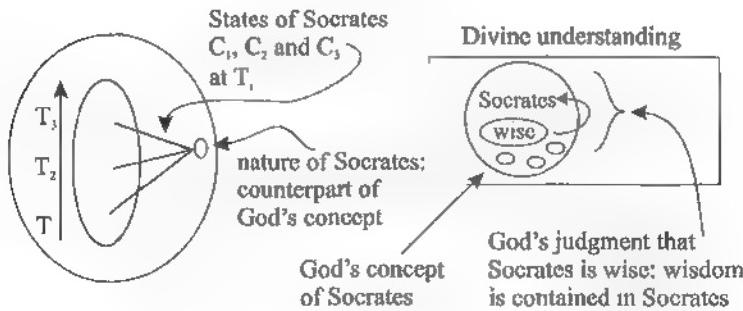


Figure 2

(Socrates is probably somewhere with us still, you know. Actually, I don't know whether Leibniz thought that Socrates was saved—that's a problem; I don't know whether he is in heaven or not.) In any case, the idea is that before Socrates really flourished, he existed as a sort of minuscule Socrates. So, Socrates lasts much longer than the mere fifty or so years that he lived in Athens.

7. Here is Socrates. Socrates has an individual nature and I represent this nature as something that in some way is inhering in Socrates and which, somehow, continues to inhere. I am depicting it so that we can regard the nature as something that is always there. But this nature specifies the whole history; so, Socrates has a nature which specifies everything that is true of him. If this is a state,  $C_1$ , of Socrates at a certain time, then his nature includes, that at that time, he will be in that state. And, if he is in another state,  $C_2$ , at time  $T_2$ , then his nature will specify that. Now this nature is a counterpart of God's conception of Socrates; God has a conception of Socrates that includes every state that happens to him.

8. Of course, to say that Socrates is wise is to make a very complicated statement about him. Wisdom is not like a momentary state, more like an enduring trait; but I won't try to spell out the difference between kinds of attributes. Slurring that over, let's say that there is a feature of this nature that is wisdom; it is somehow a characteristic of this life-plan, you might say, because a nature is essentially a life-plan and this one is characterized by wisdom.<sup>2</sup>

9. We have then our judgment that Socrates is wise; we have God's judgment that Socrates is wise; we have God's conception of Socrates; and then we have the realization of that nature, Socrates' nature, in the actual world and it includes that attribute of being wise. The next thing that we want to do is to start off from a different angle and look at the problem of relations.

### *B. Relations: reality and ideality*

10. This nature of Socrates includes everything that is true of him at any time in his existence. It is true of him, for example, that he stood on the Agora at a certain time; so we can think of him as being "on the Agora." So we now have to see in what sense such spatial relations can be true of Socrates and can be included in his nature. In what sense is his relation to the Agora as he stood on it a part of his nature? Of course, we know that Leibniz held that spatial relationships are phenomenal and what I want to do is to spell out exactly what this means.

11. Suppose  $S_1$  is between  $S_2$  and  $S_3$ . What we have in mind is spatial "inbetweenness." In a sense, Leibniz is denying that any such statement about spatial relationships is ever true; relational statements of this sort are not literally true. They are, in a kind of second-class way, true. They are second-class citizens in the domain of truths. They correspond to first-class truths, but the first class truths are metaphysically OK, whereas these as such are not metaphysically OK.

12. Now, let's come down to the nitty gritty. According to Leibniz, reality

<sup>2</sup>PPHP, ML, sections V and VI.

consists of monads. Monads are simple substances that have no actual parts; they can have attributes—perceptions and appetitions and so on—but they have no parts. So, here would be a simple substance. Of course, I have to represent it spatially, but you have your converter with you and you will convert my spatial diagrams into non-spatial diagrams, just as I start out with them as non-spatial diagrams and project them onto this board here. Here is a monad, S<sub>1</sub> (Figure 3).

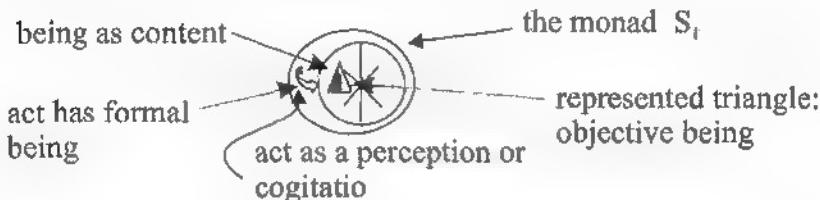


Figure 3

13. I'm going to abstract from time now. So, here (Figure 3) is a certain act of representing—a perception in the broad sense, a perceiving, a thinking, a *cogitatio* in the Cartesian sense. Of course, in order to make our diagram carry the burden it has, I am working with the act/content distinction. In other words, I am going to use the cartoonist balloon, because this is undoubtedly the picture which governed or accompanied much of the argumentation in philosophy of mind then. This means that we have the notion of "being as content" or objective being as contrasted with formal being. Remember: the act has formal being; the content has objective being.

14. I start out with a simple case, one in which the monad is representing a triangle. The triangle doesn't have actual existence. From the fact that S<sub>1</sub> represents a triangle, it doesn't follow that there is a triangle: that shows us that, in a broad sense, this is an intensional context, intensionality with an 's'.

15. Leibniz holds, putting it bluntly, that there are no triangles having formal reality. There are no actually existing triangles. The *esse* of triangles is "being represented." The only kind of existence that they have is as contents or possible contents in some mind. You see, Descartes would have thought "well, here is a mind representing a triangle; so there could be a triangle in actual space." However, for Leibniz, there is no actual space. And, you have to take this seriously otherwise Leibniz doesn't exist at all. Just as when working with Kant, you have to take very seriously the idea that, according to Kant, nothing with shape or size has formal reality. Of course, what Kant does is to pack a new meaning into the word 'actual' so that in the *Critical* sense of actuality, there are things which actually have shape or size; the word 'actual' receives a very specific critical meaning in which it corresponds, roughly, to Leibniz' notion of a phenomenal actuality.

16. We are working here with the Cartesian distinction between formal and objective reality. Leibniz holds that nothing spatial has formal reality; it exists only as represented by a mind. Let us try to get a grip, then, on what develops into the

Kantian account of the actuality of space and objects in space. Kant, really, is very close to Leibniz.

17. Let's take our system of three monads,  $S_1$ ,  $S_2$ , and  $S_3$ , and try to get something that can at least capture some of the structure in the metaphysical mode of the monad as opposed to the phenomenal domain of space. In space, an object is between object and object. Of course, any object that we speak of as being in space is infinitely complex. When we go to the monads, we do our metaphysics in terms of simples. What I am going to do then is to start out with the general schema "object in space is between object and object" and then go down to the monad and find something that can be the counterpart of this so that we can get a grip on the structure here (granting, of course, that these objects are complex and any relation between the objects must be understood in terms of relations between the constituents of them, ad infinitum.)

18. Here (Figure 4) are some monads,  $S_1$ ,  $S_2$ , and  $S_3$ . They are non-spatially related. Let's suppose that this monad,  $S_2$ , represents  $S_1$ .  $S_1$ , then, has objective being in  $S_2$ . Let's suppose, further, that  $S_1$  represents  $S_3$ .

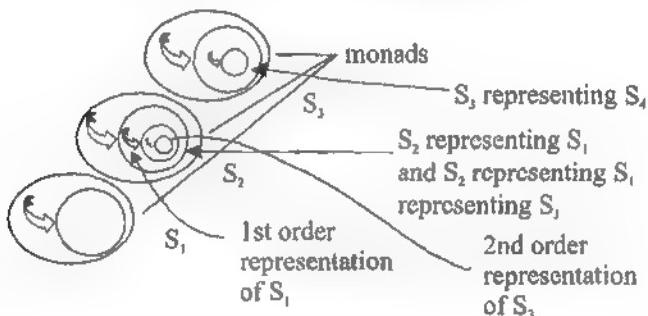


Figure 4

Well, let's not think now in terms of abstract intellectual representing. You must remember that representing for Leibniz includes, not only clear and distinct thoughts, it also includes roughly, sense perception and sensation: perception in the sense of perceiving expanses of colors. I want you to think of this, then, in terms of what Leibniz would call *petites perceptions* because it is in terms of those that he gives his account of space as a phenomenal order.

19. Alright, well,  $S_2$  represents  $S_1$ . But now,  $S_2$  not only represents  $S_1$  but represents the state of  $S_1$ . What does  $S_1$  represent? Of course we would need a huge blackboard to get anything like what we need in order to represent the infinite complexity of a monad's perceptual state at the time; so, if you want, you can imagine a blank here and leave room for a lot more. I'm just picking out one feature to find what it's logical structure is. So,  $S_1$  represents  $S_3$ .  $S_2$  represents  $S_1$  and it represents  $S_1$  as representing  $S_3$ .  $S_2$  is representing  $S_1$ 's act of representing  $S_3$ .

20. What can we say? Well, we can say that  $S_2$  has a 1<sup>st</sup> order representation

of  $S_1$ , and a 2<sup>nd</sup> order representation of  $S_3$ , because  $S_2$  has a representing of a representing of  $S_3$ . You might say,  $S_2$  is representing  $S_3$  directly, but  $S_2$  is representing  $S_3$  indirectly because it is representing  $S_1$ 's act of representing  $S_3$ . Thus, we can speak of this as a mediate representing of  $S_3$ .

21. Of course, we can continue this. We can have  $S_3$  representing  $S_4$  (Figure 4). We really have to think of this as going on, because according to Leibniz, every monad is always representing every *other* monad and not only is every monad representing every other monad, it is also representing every *state* of every other monad. In other words, Leibniz thinks that our *petites perceptions* are infinitely complex, not just in the sense that they are infinitely many of them, but that they are complex in an interesting dimension that is usually overlooked: they are infinitely complex in this "nestedness," as I put it. Thus,  $S_2$  is representing  $S_1$ ;  $S_1$  is representing  $S_3$ ;  $S_3$  is representing  $S_4$ . Well then, of course,  $S_1$  will be representing  $S_3$  as representing  $S_4$ . Therefore,  $S_2$  will be representing  $S_1$  as representing  $S_3$  as representing  $S_4$ ; so  $S_2$  will have a doubly-mediate representation of  $S_4$ .

22. Let's take seriously this idea that every monad is always representing every other monad and, indeed, every perception of every other monad. For example, according to Leibniz, right now, you have a perception which is a representation of Julius Caesar. Now you can comb your experience until you are tired and worn out and blue in the face and you won't find it, but it is there! Furthermore, you now have a perception of a certain point on the other side of the moon or, rather, of a monad corresponding to a certain point on the other side of the moon. You can search your perceptions, you won't find it. When Leibniz is talking about these *petites perceptions*, you have to understand how rich his notion is. Otherwise, nothing that he says will make sense and it seems, finally, to be pulled out a hat.

23. Given this structure of the *petites perceptions*, recall that we can describe  $S_2$ 's representation metaphysically, as I said, as a doubly-mediated representation of simple substance  $S_4$ . It is also, for Leibniz, that which appears, if you will, that which is experienced as "something-being-beyond-something". In other words, the metaphysical counterpart of "beyondness" is the indirectness, or mediacy, of our representation. Putting it crudely, something corresponding to  $S_4$  appears to be beyond something else and appears beyond something else because of this nestedness of their representations. One monad is representing something as representing something as representing something. So, there is a structural similarity—that is all I'm driving at here. It is this nesting of representations that corresponds to that "beyondness". Something appears to be beyond something else because of this nestedness of their representations: a structural similarity. Let me put it this way:  $S_4$  is beyond  $S_3$ , which is beyond  $S_2$  which is...out there. It is this nesting of representations that corresponds to that beyondness. Putting it crudely, phenomenally, the further a thing is away, the more indirectly is it being represented at the level of these *petites perceptions*.

24. Of course, I have just taken a slice out of the set of monads, but actually there is an infinity of monads involved here. At the level of *petites perceptions*,

there is a continuum of *beyondness* which corresponds to the continuum of mediacy of representing. So, for Leibniz, the metaphysical counterpart of spatial continuity in a direction, you see, is continuity of indirectness of representation.

25. Notice that what we have done, then, is to take something that looks like a "real" relation, namely, a spatial relation, something being next to something, and transform it into what Leibniz calls an "ideal" relation. Now what does "ideal relation" mean? It means a relation involving—what kind of being? Objective being. Being as content. This is the principle and we will want to spell it out further.

26. I want to show you the basic logical structure here. Leibniz' basic logical structure is that "beyondness" in a direction has, as its metaphysical correlate, a certain indirectness of representation. So, the appearance of an item being beyond an item with respect to me is grounded in my representing the first item indirectly by representing the second item as representing it. And it is perfectly clear, a triviality, that you can map a spatial continuum (supposing that there is such a thing) into a continuum of indirectness of representation. It is just that you get a different model: Leibniz gives us a metaphysical model in terms of objective reality and the notion of representing. He is giving us a metaphysical model for geometry.

27. The first thing to be clear about, before we go on any further, is that according to Leibniz, this monad,  $S_2$ , could have existed all by itself without the existence of any other monad. God could have created this monad: "Gee, I like that monad; it is a swell monad. I want it." So, what does he do? He thinks of this monad doing all this representing and he actualizes it. Consequently, he has this monad representing other monads representing other monads representing other monads and so on—although there aren't any other monads. Well, what does that mean in contemporary terms? It means that these other representations are false or, if you will, they have no truth value—depending on whether you regard judgments that presuppose the existence of such things as false.

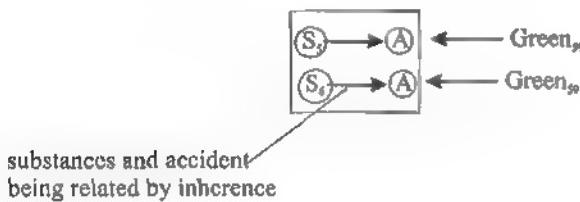
28. If God had agreed that this monad that is representing items representing items representing items, ..., is all by itself, he would create a monad which contains a radically false representation. Naturally, God was just on the point of creating this monad and said, "No, that won't do. Falsity is an imperfection; truth is a perfection. I can't really create this one unless I create the other ones too." God could have created you representing the universe without there being a pure dominant monad. The initial reason he doesn't do that is because to create you representing the universe from a certain point of view without creating other monads would be to create a monad that has radically false representations and falsity is an imperfection.

29. Now that isn't the whole story because, ultimately, God has to choose between whole packages of monads. I was making the point that there is no contradiction in the idea of there being a world consisting simply of one monad representing other monads representing other monads although nothing else existed. As I said, that is perfectly straightforward and unproblematic. The key metaphysical point so far is that Leibniz starts out with statements affirming what we ordinarily regard as real relations between objects and he turns them into ideal relations which

are to be explicated in terms of the notion of objective being, degree of directness of representation, and hovering around that are the relations of truth and existence.

### C. Relations and inherence

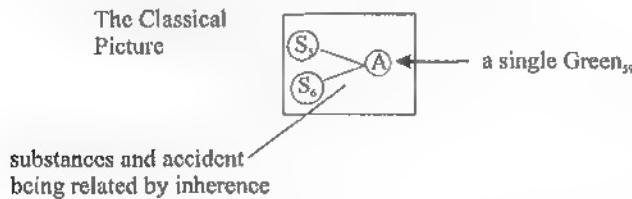
30. Why didn't Leibniz think it was okay to have objects having spatial relations and just let it go at that? Here is where we come to the key metaphysical thesis that underlies his brilliant metaphysical move. Suppose that we take the traditional view of substance.



**Figure 5**

Suppose that we have a substance that has a certain attribute, say, of being green, or being hot. Traditionally, this was regarded as a matter of the inherence in this substance of an accident. I'm not concerned to discuss the difference between substantial form and accidental form. So, I won't concern myself with the core nature of this substance, the substantial form, but with the accidents.

31. Suppose that this substance is green. It is Forest Green, Pittsburgh Paint #59—that isn't really true, you know; they don't really offer you that much choice. Well, anyway, a certain specific shade in an idealized Pittsburgh Paints catalog. OK. Suppose that we have two substances which are  $\text{Green}_{59}$ . The idea is that each substance had its own personal  $\text{green}_{59}$  (Figure 5).



**Figure 6**

32. The model that we tend to have is that here is a thing that is  $\text{green}_{59}$ , and here is another thing that is  $\text{green}_{59}$ , but there is one  $\text{green}_{59}$ , and each thing exemplifies it (Figure 6). But that is the straightforward extreme realist view

according to traditional conceptions. The view here is rather that we have two accidents, each of which is a green,<sub>59</sub> but that they are exactly alike (Figure 5). So we get the idea of qualitative identity coming in here as opposed to a numerically identical universal. So (Figure 5), we have an accident inhering in substance<sub>5</sub> and another accident, exactly like it, inhering in substance<sub>6</sub>. These are exactly alike.

34. If this is your model for what it is for a substance to have an accident, then you are in trouble when it comes to relations—as philosophers throughout the ages have always discovered. After all, using this model, how are you going to construe, let's say, a certain substance S<sub>1</sub> being R to S<sub>2</sub>? Well, notice that it is crucial for this puzzle—and if you miss it then you won't see the puzzle—that this accident be a green<sub>59</sub>, a particular, a dependent particular (in some modern terminologies). Thus, we have two green<sub>59</sub>s. When you have

$$S_1 \text{ R } S_2$$

and there is S<sub>1</sub> and there is S<sub>2</sub>, the real problem is how are you going to put R into our metaphysical schema? If we put R here with S<sub>1</sub>, then this substance, S<sub>2</sub>, is left out in the cold obviously. On the other hand, if we put R with S<sub>2</sub>, then S<sub>1</sub> is going to be left out in the cold. And, even if you tried some kind of "overlapping" so that they could "share" R, you would still run into a problem. We have run into a theological puzzle because metaphysical issues were often tested by asking, "Could God bring it about that...?" Well, God could bring it about that S<sub>2</sub> doesn't exist. Thus, we have the classical puzzle: we would have a relation without the other term.<sup>3</sup>

A brief excursus on the classical problem of relations will set the stage for the next step in the argument. Suppose one thinks that the truth of

This leaf is green

requires that there be an item inhering in this leaf which is its greenness in the metaphysical sense of a dependent particular numerically different from all other greennesses, even of exactly the same shade, which inhere in other substances. Then relational predication immediately generates a puzzle. Consider

S<sub>1</sub> is R to S<sub>2</sub>

If we treat this proposition as a special case of

S<sub>1</sub> is P

thus,

<sup>3</sup>Sellars elaborates on this discussion of relations in section III of *ML* (chapter VI of *PPHP*). Section III is here reproduced in its entirety.

$S_1$  is R-to- $S_2$

and attempt to introduce a dependent particular which corresponds to this predicate as a particular greenness corresponds to "This leaf is green," we are faced with a dilemma:

1. Is the dependent particular an R-to- $S_2$ ? This would seem to require that  $S_2$  inhere in  $S_1$  as being a part of the R-to- $S_2$  which inheres in  $S_1$ .
2. Is the dependent particular an R rather than an R-to- $S_2$ ? If so, then it inheres in either (a)  $S_1$  alone, or (b) both  $S_1$  and  $S_2$ , or (c) neither  $S_1$  nor  $S_2$ . But not (a), for then the fact  $S_1$  is R to  $S_2$  would be unaccounted for; furthermore, it would imply that  $S_1$  could stand in the relation without having a relatum. And not (b), for "an accident cannot have its feet in two subjects." Even if  $S_1$  and  $S_2$  could share an R,  $S_2$  might cease to exist (thus, be destroyed by God) and we would be back to the absurdity of the previous alternative. And not (c), for particulars other than substances are *dependent* (i.e., necessarily inhere in substances).

Leibniz found an interesting way out of this dilemma. In effect, he adopts a modified form of the first horn. He accepts the principle that if

$S_1$  is R to  $S_2$

is true, then there must be an R-to- $S_2$  inherent in  $S_1$ , and he accepts the consequence that  $S_2$  must be in  $S_1$ . But he reinterprets these commitments in the light of the Cartesian (ultimately scholastic) distinction between "representative" (or "objective") and "formal" being. Thus, the R-to- $S_2$  inherent in  $S_1$  is interpreted as a representing of  $S_2$  inherent in  $S_1$ , and Leibniz, therefore, interprets the sense in which  $S_2$  is a "part" of the R-to- $S_2$  inherent in  $S_1$  as a matter of its being that which has objective or representative being in the representing which is the R-to- $S_2$ . According to this analysis, the truth of statements of the form

$S_1$  is R<sub>i</sub> to  $S_2$ ,

where R<sub>i</sub> is *prima facie* a real relation, rests on facts of the form

$S_1$  represents (in specific manner M<sub>i</sub>)  $S_2$

where, needless to say, the manner of representation M<sub>i</sub> which corresponds to R<sub>i</sub> and makes this relational fact a phenomenon *bene fundatum*, is not what common sense has in mind when it uses the term "R<sub>i</sub>".<sup>5</sup>

[Footnote 5 reads: "Thus the statement, in the phenomenal framework of material things in space,

S<sub>1</sub> is linearly between S<sub>2</sub> and S<sub>3</sub>,  
might have as its real counterpart something like

S<sub>1</sub> represents S<sub>2</sub> and S<sub>3</sub> more directly than S<sub>2</sub> and S<sub>3</sub> represent each other  
where a representing of S<sub>1</sub> is indirect if it is a representing of a representing of  
S<sub>3</sub>.]

If it is objected that on the above account

$S_1$  is R to  $S_2$

could be true even though  $S_2$  did not exist, since non-existent substances can be represented, Leibniz would welcome this objection, but turn its edge by agreeing that the truth of the relational statement requires the actual existence of both  $S_1$  and  $S_2$ , and hence the mere fact that  $S_1$  represents a substance in the appropriate manner does not make the corresponding relational statement true. The substance represented must have formal as well as objective being in order for this to be the case. After all, his problem was to resolve the classical puzzle about relations, and this he has done, to his own satisfaction, by giving phenomenal relations between substances a metaphysical underpinning in which they have as their real counterparts acts of representing and mobilizing the distinction between the two modes of being which representables may have. Roughly, a true representation is one the subject matter of which is a representable which, in addition to having "objective" being in the representation, has "formal" being in the world.

## Aristotelian Philosophies of Mind

### I

1. I propose in this essay to examine certain concepts and propositions which make up the backbone of the Aristotelian philosophy of mind. Since I do not have the space to develop my argument by way of detailed commentary on texts and quotations, and since isolated quotations are notoriously two-faced and of little scholarly value compared to the space necessary to make them intelligible to the non-technical reader, I shall instead proceed by developing as clearly as possible the assumptions and conclusions which, as I see it, are *typical* of the way in which classical Aristotelianism dealt with problems relating to the nature of thought. By laying bare its logical skeleton, I hope to show how *reasonable* the Aristotelian philosophy was, and that, in so far as it made mistakes, the mistakes were not foolish but sprang from plausibilities and confusions the true character of which could be exposed only with the aid of intellectual tools which were centuries in the future, and are not even yet in general use among philosophers.

2. Before we turn to this more specific task, however, we must first sketch the general framework of ideas in terms of which this philosophy approaches its problems. The framework is the "hylomorphic" conception of the world, that is to say, its interpretation in terms of the contrast between matter (*hylē*) and form (*morphe*) as these terms are understood in the Aristotelian tradition.<sup>1</sup>

3. At the level of common sense we interpret our world as consisting of an immense multitude of *things* each of which falls in one or another of a relatively small number of *kinds*. These things work out histories consisting of successive *states*. Though things and states alike come into existence and cease to exist, things are distinguishable from their actual histories. This difference is bound up with the fact that a thing could have behaved otherwise than it actually did. The "capacities" of things are richer than the actual sequence of events in which they participate. Though this water is now liquid, it *could have been* solid; it had it in it to be solid. What a thing has it in it to be is its *nature*. It is the nature of water to freeze and boil, of turnip seeds to grow into turnips. It is with reference to their natures that things are divided into kinds.

4. Something is clearly lacking in what I have just said. We must say not only that a thing *could* have behaved otherwise than it did, but also that it *would* have

<sup>1</sup>The phrase "formal materialism" frequently occurs in contemporary Thomist literature as an alternative to "hylomorphism," particularly when it is a question of wooing intellectuals whose quest for certainty has led them to flirt with "dialectical" materialism, or any other philosophy avowedly materialistic in character, and for whom this phrase might build a bridge to the eternal verities. See Mortimer Adler, *What Man Has Made of Man* (1938), pp. 167ff., 180. For an elementary statement of Thomistic hylomorphism, see Jacques Maritain, *Introduction to Philosophy* (1930), pp. 166ff.

behaved differently if the circumstances had been different. Water is not only "capable" of freezing; it would freeze if the temperature were reduced to 32°F. To clarify this fact we must distinguish between the concepts of *capacity* and *dispositional property*.<sup>2</sup> Both involve a reference to laws of nature, but the former is a weaker notion and is essentially negative. To say that a thing is capable of being in a certain state is to say that its being in that state is contrary to no law of nature.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, to speak of a dispositional property of the thing with respect to that state involves a positive reference to a law associating that state with a certain kind of circumstance. Thus, to say that dispositional property D necessitates the occurrence of state  $S_i$  in circumstance  $C_i$  must, if true, be true by definition; for D can only be defined as the property of

being in state	in circumstances
$S_1$	$C_1$
$S_2$	$C_2$
.	.
.	.
.	.
$S_n$	$C_n$

and, if the statement is true, then  $S_i$  and  $C_i$  must be among the values included in these lists.

5. Now while the above indicates the lines along which the concept of a dispositional property and hence of the nature of a thing would have to be analyzed and already makes it clear that the correct analysis of what a thing has in it to be involves a reference to causal laws, it is by no means true that one must know this analysis in order to make use of the thing-nature language. It is characteristic of human thought that we are constantly making sensible use of concepts which we are not able, at the time, to explicate.

6. It follows from what we have been saying that concepts of *kinds of things* are the ways in which common sense crystallizes its experience of the world, and that this crystallization contains the common-sense grasp of natural laws, crude and incomplete though this grasp may be. To the philosopher it is an interesting and important fact that common sense thus formulates its understanding of the world order in terms of a framework which, when correctly analyzed, is seen to be

<sup>2</sup>I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to Prof. C. D. Broad's discussion of dispositional properties and the concept of the nature of a thing in *An Examination of McTaggart's Philosophy* (1933), Vol. I, pp. 142-151, 264-278. See also chap. X of his *The Mind and Its Place in Nature*.

<sup>3</sup>Note that the contrast between "state" and "circumstance" belongs to the thing-nature language. Causal laws conceived of as functional correlations of events are not formulated in terms of "states" and "circumstances." The relation of the thing-nature or thing-property language to the event-law language is not the simple one of whole to part. Laws are formulated differently in these two frameworks. See also note 5 below.

logically more complicated than that of a functional correlation of events.<sup>4</sup> It is not my purpose either to "defend" or to "attack" the thing-nature framework,<sup>5</sup> but rather to show the use to which it was put by a philosophy which was unable to give it a correct analysis.

7. I conclude, then, that the concept of the nature of a thing, in so far as it is a coherent one, can be analyzed in terms of the concept of a dovetailing set of dispositional properties which specify both the states by which it has responded to its historical circumstances and the states by which it would have responded to other circumstances.

8. We have spoken of a "dovetailing set of dispositional properties," for it is clear that according to the common-sense framework, a thing not only may, but invariably does, have more than one dispositional property. Of the relations between different properties (we shall now use this shorter expression) of one and the same thing, that which most interested the Aristotelians was a relation which we might call "being founded on." Thus, to the Aristotelian, biological properties are founded on physicochemical properties. This relation is not to be confused with that of *being analyzable into*, which is what the mechanist believes to hold in the case of these two kinds of properties.

9. According to the Aristotelian, the various kinds of things to be found in our part of the universe fall into irreducible levels. The hierarchy consists of

- (1) merely physical substances,
- (2) living but not sensate physical substances (the vegetative level),
- (3) sensate but not rational living physical substances (the brute level), and
- (4) rational sensate living physical substances.

<sup>4</sup>It is especially significant to the historian of philosophy that the thing-nature framework, though historically prior to and more "natural" than the event-law framework which was to dominate science from the seventeenth century on, could be correctly analyzed only by a philosopher who has a clear conception of a law of nature, and that, although many if not all laws can be formulated in both the event-law and the thing-nature framework, attention is explicitly focused on laws only in the process of research which must make use of the event-law framework. The language of things and properties, states and circumstances, where it is appropriate, sums up what we know. But the scientist doesn't know what kinds of *things* there are until he has arrived at laws which can be translated into the thing language. Thus, the historian infers that one would hardly expect to find a correct analysis of the thing-nature framework until scientists were explicitly looking for causal laws. He also infers that, unless the thing-nature framework is essential to science, it would be discarded by the scientist in favor of the event-law framework, so that the motivation for such an analysis would be lacking at the very time it becomes possible. The history of philosophy bears out both these inference. On the other hand, the historian, would expect that, should it ever become either necessary or convenient to formulate certain areas of knowledge in the language of things and dispositions, philosophers of science would soon reexamine this framework.

<sup>5</sup>Whether the elaboration of concepts within the thing-nature framework is anything more than a convenient common-sense dodge, whether it is, in the last analysis, self-consistent and, indeed, whether this elaboration is possible with anything other than the crudest laws, are questions into which we shall not enter. For a discussion of these and other questions which together make up the philosophical problem of "substance," the reader is referred to Prof. Everett J. Nelson's essay in this volume.

Each thing or substance of a higher level has properties of a kind to be found in things of a lower level. Thus, vegetables *fall*, animals *take nutriment*, and men *have the power of sensation*.

10. The Aristotelian also insists that the *lower level properties of higher level substances* are not identical with the *lower level properties of lower level substances*. This is reasonable, since, for example, what physical events will happen to a higher order substance, e.g., an animal, depends in part on what events of higher order, e.g., sensations and appetites, are going on in that substance.<sup>6</sup> The lower order properties of higher order substances are thus as bound up with the higher order properties of these substances as the higher order properties are bound up with them.

11. To sum up, the "dovetailing" of the properties of a substance involves

- (1) the dependence of higher level properties on lower level properties,
- (2) the connectedness of its lower level properties with the higher level properties founded on them, and
- (3) the necessary coexistence of such properties as are on the same level.

These three modes of connectedness make the nature of a thing a genuine unity. The concept of unity of the nature of a substance plays a key role in one of the arguments we shall be considering below. Needless to say, all these modes of connectedness can be given a correct analysis only in terms of laws of nature.

12. We are now in a position to characterize the Aristotelian conception of *form*. First, we note that it is only too easy to overlook the fact that a disposition word is properly *defined* in terms of a specific correlation of states and circumstances. One who philosophizes on the basis of the common-sense view of the world has nothing to protect him from thinking of it as standing for an entity which "generates" or "produces" states  $S_1, \dots, S_n$  in circumstances  $C_1, \dots, C_n$ , and from finding here an ontological fruitfulness, an overflow, a necessity which is no mere consequence of a definition.<sup>7</sup> It is equally easy to fall into the similar error of thinking of the unity of the dovetailing properties which make up the nature of a thing or substance as itself a distinguishable entity from which the various properties "follow" in the same "fruitful" way.<sup>8</sup> Such an entity would be an Aristotelian *form* (or, as the Scholastics were to put it, a *substantial form*) if the Aristoteleans had started out with a reason-

<sup>6</sup>Adler, *op. cit.* pp. 111, 190.

<sup>7</sup>Leibnitz was to realize that the necessity with which the states of things occur, given their natures and circumstances, is analytic or tautological, but, owing to a confusion about relations, was to think that a reference to circumstances could not be involved in the definition of the nature of a substance. More accurately, this confusion led him to conceive of the circumstances to which a substance responds by taking on a given state as *other states of the same thing*. For this to be plausible, he had to put the environment of each thing inside the thing. The result was his famous doctrine that each monad or substance mirrors the entire universe.

<sup>8</sup>"Essence and power are distinct, but powers flow from essence." Adler, *Problems for Thomists. The Problem of Species*, p. 182.

ably clear-cut notion of a dispositional property and had only blundered in the two ways we have just pointed out. Actually, as we have indicated, they did not have this clear-cut notion. The consequences for the Aristotelian interpretation of nature and science were enormous.

13. Turning now to the Aristotelian concept of matter, we must be extremely brief, since this concept plays a minimal role in our argument and what must be said can best be said when needed.

14. We tend today to mean by "matter" a set of *things* which in no sense are made up of other *things* and of which all the properties are of a sort which we should call "physical," or, at least, would refuse to call "mental" or "vital." In this "thing-language" framework, materialism is the doctrine that all things either are "ground-floor" things of the above sort, or else are "made up" of such things. Materialism takes two forms. (1) *Reductive materialism*, according to which all properties of "composite" things are "reducible" to properties of matter—which amounts to saying that except for convenience (abbreviation) an omniscient scientist would need no more non-logical and non-mathematical symbols to describe human organisms than he needs to describe the *behavior* of matter in a mindless universe. I say "behavior" because if dispositional properties are included, the criterion will not distinguish reductive from non-reductive materialism. For if *reductive* materialism be false, one could not describe the dispositional properties of matter in a mindless universe without referring to specifically mental characteristics. (*If* such and such *had* happened, mental events *would have occurred*, and the universe would not have been mindless.) (2) *Emergent materialism* is materialism which denies the "reductionist" claim.

15. The notion to be found in emergent materialism of things and properties which are "founded" on "lower level things and properties" and ultimately on "ground-floor things and properties" is also to be found in Aristotle;<sup>9</sup> and when he says that matter is *matter for form*, part of what he has in mind is that lower order things are matter for higher order things which, in some sense, include them without being reducible to them. It is only with the further contention that even ground-floor substances consist of matter and form that the Aristotelian conception of matter shows itself to be radically different from that of the emergent materialist. That ground-floor substances involve form is clear; water (which is one of Aristotle's ground-floor substances) has a nature, has properties. But what could the matter for water be? Clearly it cannot be a substance with a nature, for then water would not be on the ground floor. Thus, the "matter" for ground-floor substances must be "indeterminate," that is to say, without a positive nature of its own.

16. Why did Aristotle think that he needed an indeterminate principle? There are a number of mutually reinforcing considerations, some of which will come out in

<sup>9</sup> Aristotle thought that *historically* the higher could not come from the lower, and believed that all natural kinds have existed from eternity, because he confused "coming from" with "reducible to." Contemporary Aristotelians who are aware of the distinction rightly see no incompatibility between "irreducible levels" and "evolution."

our later argument. At this point we shall limit ourselves to pointing out that Aristotle, in accordance with what was rapidly becoming the dominant trend in classical philosophy, *refused to think of the actual history of the world as an ultimate fact*. Process must not only *depend on*, it must also somehow be *derived from* factors which are intrinsically immune from change or becoming. (It will be recognized that this assumption underlies many of the metaphysical arguments for the existence of God.) Now, things or substances change; but it does not even make sense (except metaphorically) to say that the natures or forms of things change. Thus, change is impossible unless there is more to things than their forms. This more is matter, *prime* or *first* matter. But not all forms need matter; only those from whose forms "follow" contrary states, only those whose nature involves a reference to states which cannot coexist—only the forms of changing things.

17. How matter which is completely indeterminate can cooperate with form to "produce" change, or how, indeed, it can perform *any* function, is difficult to see, though we shall have more to say on this subject later on. The inadequacy of form and matter to "account" for change is recognized by Aristotle himself; he finds himself forced to introduce an Unchanging Changer. But it is, of course, no easier to "derive" change from three unchanging factors than from two. The actual history of the universe must be recognized to be an ultimate fact. There may be other aspects of reality on which process *depends*, in the sense that without them it would be impossible; but process cannot derive from that which is not process. This, however, is a story for another occasion.

## II

18. In the pre-Socratic period of Greek philosophy, philosophers had searched for one or more stuffs of which all things are made. Thus if they spoke of the "common realities" shared by the objects of our sense experience, they meant the ultimate ingredients of which perceptible, ephemeral objects were mixtures. Socrates and Plato, on the other hand, gradually and imperfectly disentangled the different notion of the *common* as *universal*.

19. When today the philosopher considers the statements, "*This* is a triangle" and "*That* is a triangle," he characterizes them as saying of two *particulars* that they *exemplify* one and the same *universal*, namely *Triangularity*, and he does this irrespective of his views on the "ontological status" of universals. Thus, in interpreting these statements, he characterizes Triangularity as an *identity* which is *common* to the many triangular objects that come and go in the world process.

20. Now it is clear that it does not make sense to speak of universals as *changing* or *coming into existence or ceasing to be*. It is rather to the objects which exemplify universals that these concepts apply. In these respects, universals are like the

fundamental stuffs of the pre-Socratics, for example the atoms of Democritus.<sup>10</sup> If it is pointed out that the latter were not immune from all change, since they formed the world-process by a constant mixing and unmixing, can we not reply that the various universals are related to (exemplified by) different particulars at different times? This point of resemblance between universals and world-stuffs might have been sufficient by itself to lead Socrates and perhaps the younger Plato to hold that universals are ingredients, and, indeed, the most "real" ingredients of the world-process. But there were other and even more convincing considerations.

21. Every truth (or falsehood, for that matter) involves at least one universal. Thus, "*This* is round" tells us that in *this* we have a case of Roundness, that *this* exemplifies Roundness. Now thoughts, or at least some kinds of thought, are characterizable as either true or false. Therefore thought *has to do with* universals. It is difficult (though, fortunately, not impossible) to avoid the conclusion that this is no metaphor. Surely universals must have a mode of existence such that mind can "grasp" or "apprehend" them.<sup>11</sup>

22. Thus, universals became to incipient Platonism the most real ingredients of the world-process, which thought could grasp, thus gaining knowledge of existence in so far as it is capable of being known. Furthermore, thought at its best, which, for the Greeks, was the thinking characteristic of geometrical demonstration, not only is concerned with universals (the various *kinds* of geometrical object), but is actually indifferent as to whether or not these universals are exemplified in the "world of becoming." Universals, it was concluded, are the appropriate objects of mind; particulars are the appropriate objects of the senses.<sup>12</sup>

23. It soon became apparent that the relation of universals to perceptible objects

<sup>10</sup>A. E. Taylor, in his *Varia Socratica*, has shown that by the time of Socrates the term "idea" (*eidōs*, *ἰδέα*), which originally referred to the human form, had become a technical term for the ultimate ingredients which mix and unmix to form the world process. Thus Democritus referred to his atoms as Ideas. Compare the process by which the German word *Gestalt* has become a technical term in psychology, and, indeed, in philosophy.

<sup>11</sup>The solution of the problem of universals consists exactly in showing that the following statements are all true. (1) Universals exist. (2) Thoughts mean universals. (3) It is nonsense to speak of any psychological relationship between thought and universals. The solution involves *first* a making explicit of the ambiguities of the term "existence," and *second* a distinction between "meaning" as a term belonging to the framework of logical analysis and criticism, and "meaning" as a descriptive term in empirical psychology relating to habits of response to and manipulation of linguistic symbols. The classical conception of mind as apprehending universals and meanings is based on a confusion of the logical with the psychological frame of reference. To deny that universals "exist" *when speaking in the framework of logical analysis* (logical nominalism) is as mistaken as to assert that universals "exist" *when speaking in the framework of the psychological description of thought* (ontological realism or Platonism).

<sup>12</sup>Recent logical analysis has made it clear that just as every thought involves a reference to at least one universal, so every thought—even the most "abstract"—involves a reference to at least one particular. Indeed, instead of abstract thoughts referring to *no* particulars, the exact opposite is the case, for they refer to *all* particulars. Thus, "All A is B" says of every item in the universe that if it is an A it is a so a B. This line of thought cannot be explored on this occasion. It is sufficient to note that, if sound, it explodes the Platonic contention that universals are more appropriately the objects of thought than are particulars.

was quite different than that of the atoms or other elemental ingredients discussed by the pre-Socratics. "Mixing" and "sharing" or "participation" could now be used only in a thoroughly metaphorical sense. Yet that the spatio-temporal world is in some way derived from a domain of universals (perhaps in conjunction with an equally ultimate but amorphous principle), and that knowledge at its best consists in a "vision" or "grasping" of these universals—these are enduring elements in the Platonic tradition. Just how the relation of universals to particulars was to be understood became a serious problem. Fortunately, the history of this problem does not concern us here.

### III

24. Let us approach the Aristotelian-Thomist theory of mind in terms of the place of the senses in the human cognitive enterprise. We have already pointed out that, for Plato, thought at its best is solely concerned with the Ideas and their mutual relationships and, in this respect at least, is independent of the senses. Yet, even though one holds that thought at its best is not *directed upon* the objects of perception, there is room for maintaining a causal or genetic dependence of even such thought on sense experience and imagination. In other words, the shifting progress of thought by which we "grasp" now one universal, now another, may rest, in whole or in part, on the stream of sense and imagery—by which a reciprocal influence is not excluded.

25. One possible view would be that sense-experience (including the imagination) completely determines the subject matter of thought, in the sense that it "selects" the universals to be "grasped" by thought. Such an approach is completely foreign to Platonism. It is only if one is convinced on "*a priori*" grounds that thought *must* be paralleled by experienced or imagined objects that one finds the courage to populate the imagination with *non-linguistic* counterparts of thought. (To the empirically minded, of course, the only sensuous items which parallel the course of thought so closely that they could with some plausibility be held to be its determinants are the symbolic or linguistic activities of the imagination which the Platonist, when he notices them at all, takes to be a consequence or "expression" of thought. It is these symbol activities which the contemporary anti-Platonist *identifies* with thought. They are organic functions of much greater "depth" than the mere occurrence of verbal imagery.) The fact that classical philosophy neglected or minimized the role of symbolizing activities in its interpretation of thought is of vital importance for the argument that follows. We shall not have these activities in mind unless we explicitly mention them. Thus, unless otherwise indicated, they will be excluded from the scope of the terms "sense" and "imagination."

26. Now, while Aristotle, in common with Plato, rejects the position that the data of the senses and the imagination are the sole cause of the course of thought, he nevertheless insists, and in so doing parts company with Plato, that sense or

imagination is a necessary condition of every thought in that no universal<sup>13</sup> can be apprehended unless an instance of that universal is given to sense or imagination.<sup>14</sup> We shall be concerned to draw out the implications of this position, for we shall discover that the characteristic features of the Aristotelian theory of knowledge, including the puzzling distinction between the "agent intellect" and the "possible intellect," can be traced to Aristotle's adoption of this alternative.

27. In order to understand the development of the Aristotelian theory of knowledge, one must appreciate the extent to which mathematics and, in particular, geometry dominated the intellectual scene in antiquity. Geometry, it must be borne in mind, was conceived of as a science which begins with infallibly grasped elementary truths about elementary geometrical objects and proceeds to derive complicated truths concerning complicated geometrical objects. Thus conceived, geometry was a set of apprehended necessary connections between geometrical *kinds* (Point, Line, Triangle, etc.) forming a tight system with a foundation of self-evident first principles. In the absence of systematic empirical science (e.g., physics as we know it), the Greeks tended to draw the boundary between general truths which were *knowledge* or *science* and general truths which were *educated guesses* ("mere"

<sup>13</sup> It is often said that the essential difference between Platonist and Aristotelian is that while both maintain the ontological reality of universals, the Aristotelian holds that they exist only *in particulars*, the Platonist giving them an existence *apart*. One should always be cautious about attributing nonsense to intelligent philosophers; and to say that universals are literally in (or apart from) particulars is nonsense. This interpretation of the difference between Platonist and Aristotelian rests on two mistakes (1) It overlooks the fact that the "apartness" of the Platonic Ideas is, in large measure, their Olympian self-sufficiency: Plato teaching—except in the *Parmenides*?—that the Ideas would exist even if the "world of becoming" did not. (2) It rests on the assumption that the Aristotelian clearly and unambiguously thinks of his *forms* as "objective" universals, for that the forms of changing things exist only as ingredients of these things for this philosophy is granted. The truth of the matter is that the Aristotelian has a strong bias against the ontological reality of universals and tends to think of them as contents "abstracted" from sense and imagination, which contents become universals only in and for thought. The Aristotelian matter can scarcely be a principle of particularity which supplements universals (as it is for the Platonist); otherwise "pure forms" would be universals, which they clearly are not intended to be. Matter makes change possible, and in doing so is a principle of *difference* for objects having like nature, for objects of like nature can differ only in their histories. Matter is the *principium individuationis* rather than *principium particularitatis*. It must be admitted, however, that the Aristotelian has his Platonizing moments, especially when puzzled about the objectivity of knowledge. Notice that I have been speaking of the Aristotelian tradition rather than of Aristotle himself. A discussion of the extent to which the latter exhibits the characteristic ambivalence of the Aristotelian tradition with respect to the status of universals would take us far beyond the scope of this paper. Fortunately, the argument which follows does not depend on either interpretation of the Aristotelian theory of universals. For a penetrating account of Aristotle's difficulties with universals see H. F. Cherniss, *Aristotle's Criticism of Plato and the Academy*, Vol. I (1944), pp. 324–376. For the Thomistic treatment of the problem see Maritain, *Introduction to Philosophy*, pp. 160ff.; Adler, "Solution of the Problem of Species," *Thomist*, Apr., 1941, pp. 303ff. See also Maritain, *La Philosophie de la nature*, p. 9.

<sup>14</sup> *De Anima*, Bk. III, chaps. 7, 8. See W. D. Ross, *Aristotle*, 2nd ed., p. 148; Adler, *What Man Has Made of Man*, pp. 162, 175; Maritain, *Introduction to Philosophy*, pp. 170 ff., R. E. Brennan, *Thomistic Psychology* (1942), pp. 179ff., 202 Cf. Brennan's discussion of imageless thought on p. 204, where, in his eagerness to reconcile Aquinas with empirical fact, he contradicts not only the entire Aristotelian tradition, but what he has himself just finished saying.

opinion) in such a way that science included only mathematics and such other studies as shared the above characteristics of mathematics. Today, on the other hand, while we should not regard empirical science as identical in either method or the status of its results with pure mathematics, we should include both within the boundary which marks off reliable knowledge or science from the rule-of-thumb beliefs of common sense.

28. One of the characteristic features of classical geometry was the fact that its objects were capable of being given, even if only "imperfectly," a sensuous embodiment. Our visual field, in particular, presents us with geometrical points, lines, planes, and solids as the boundaries of qualitative differences—a line, for example, being a boundary between two adjacent color expanses. Furthermore, mathematicians made use of this fact in developing their proofs; and while it was recognized that the proofs were not *about* the particular lines in the diagram, yet it was believed that scrutiny of the construction was essential to the grasp of the demonstration. That this is not true of properly formulated Euclidean demonstrations (such as now exist), the theorems being logically contained in the premises, is not to the point. The historically significant fact is that there was sufficient misunderstanding of the nature of geometrical argument for it to be believed that scrutiny of diagrams is an essential ingredient in proof.

29. Turning now to Plato, we find him insisting on the necessity of diagrams for geometrical reasoning.<sup>15</sup> We might, therefore, be prepared to find him insisting that in all scientific thought there must be "illustrative material" to play the role played by diagrams in geometry. However, in the very passage in which he insists that diagrams are necessary to the *geometer's* thinking about geometrical kinds, he points out that the philosopher or *dialectician* has no need of diagrams for *his* thinking about geometrical or other kinds. We do not find in Plato a doctrine to the effect that to grasp an idea we must be acquainted at the time with an experienced exemplification of that idea.<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, whether it is because universals exist only "in" particulars (which is therefore "where" to apprehend them) or because universals are natures of experienced particulars which take on the character of universality *for thought* (so that in the absence of an experienced—or imagined—particular there can be no universal-for-thought), the Aristotelian insists that a universal can be grasped only by a mind which is acquainted at that time with a sensed or imagined exemplification of that universal. This notion, together with

<sup>15</sup> *Republic*, VI, pp. 510-511.

<sup>16</sup> The Doctrine of Recollection (*Phaedo*, pp. 72-77, *Meno*, pp. 80-86) might be thought, at a hasty glance, to be or entail such a position. Plato's point, however, is that the object of thought can neither be nor be derived from the object of the senses. He also assumes that the objects of thought cannot be directly grasped by an embodied soul (an assumption which Plato himself later abandoned, and with it the Doctrine of Recollection which falls without it). When the object of sense *seems* to be the object of thought it is because it is putting us in mind of the object of thought (of which we must have an innate non-sensuous image or imprint). He argues that what reminds us of an Idea need not be like the Idea. While he puts this forward in the *Phaedo* to reconcile recollection with the great difference between sense-objects and Ideas, it is clear that Plato does not intend to restrict the stimulus of recollection to sense-experience alone. Interrogation also can put us in mind of Ideas.

an un-Platonic optimism concerning the possibility of a *science* of the "world of becoming" (in the classical sense of "science" which we characterized above), led to the characteristically Aristotelian conception of the sciences of nature and man.

30. This conception, absorbed by Aquinas, and only gradually questioned by later Thomists under the impact of modern science, can be called the "abstractive theory of scientific knowledge." According to it, a truly scientific understanding of the various kinds of object in the world of nature is achieved by abstracting the forms of these objects from experienced cases, just as (supposedly) a truly scientific understanding of geometrical shapes is achieved by abstracting geometrical natures from experienced cases. Scientific method is that which conduces to the grasping of an ordered manifold of truths about a kind of object, by bringing about the grasping of the substantial form of an object of that kind—which substantial form is, as we saw above (paragraph 12; see also note 8), the ontological source of these truths. The fundamental role played by sense in this process is that of providing experienced cases from which the form is abstracted.

31. Aristotle combined his "abstractive" theory of thought with a causal theory of sense-perception. By this I mean that, for him, the contribution of the senses to experience consists in the fruit of the action of external objects on the organs of sense. This action was said, in Scholastic terminology, to "impress" the "sensible species" or "sensible form" of the object (e.g., a lion) on the organs of sense<sup>17</sup>— "sensible form" seeming to mean the states (or powers) of the object to which are due the resulting states of the sense organs affected by the object. The analogy used by the Aristotelians is that of a signet ring impressing its shape on wax. It is the sensible form of an object as "impressed" on the perceiver which is conceived by the Aristotelian to be the basis of an abstractive science of the object, as boundaries in the visual field are the basis of an abstractive geometry of the shapes of physical objects.<sup>18</sup>

32. Let us now ask the question, "How must the impressed sensible form of a lion be related to the substantial form of the lion if it is to be the basis for an abstractive science of lions?" Clearly, since the abstractive science of lions is the grasping of what flows from the ontological richness of the substantial form and since the

<sup>17</sup> Ross, *Aristotle*, 2nd ed., pp. 136-142; Brennan, *Thomistic Psychology*, pp. 11-16, 117-123, Maitain, *The Degrees of Knowledge* (1938), p. 143n.

<sup>18</sup> Note that the science of the geometrical properties of color patches will not be the same as the science of the geometrical properties of physical objects, unless the terms "triangular," "straight," "shape," etc., have the same sense in the context of physical objects as they do in the context of color patches. Now the important thing about the shapes of color patches is that they are directly given to consciousness, so that, if there is a mental activity of abstraction as conceived of by the Aristotelians, it will make sense to speak of grasping geometrical universals by abstraction from cases with which the mind is directly acquainted. Furthermore, if the geometrical universals exemplified by physical objects can reasonably be identified with the geometrical universals exemplified by the boundaries of colors, then the science in question would be the science of the shapes of physical objects as well as of the shapes of color patches. If we assume, in Aristotelian style, that the colors we see are in the observer's organism, then the science of physical shapes would rest on the exemplification in the knower's organism of geometrical universals. Compare the case of the science of lions in the next paragraph.

substantial form is abstracted from the perceptions of the senses, this form (called in the context of knowledge the "intelligible form") must be *present* in the impressed sensible form.<sup>19</sup> Here a decisive difficulty arises. Must we not say that for the senses to have impressed on them a character which *includes* the substantial form *Lion* is for the senses to *exemplify this form, and hence to become or contain a lion?* (So that one who sees a lion would literally have a lion in his eye!)

33. There would seem to be only two ways out of this difficulty if the notion of an abstractive science of lions is to be retained.

- (1) The causal theory of perception might be abandoned in favor of a direct realism. Lions are directly apprehended, and the intelligible form is abstracted from the lion, and not from the product of the lion's action on the eye. Whatever might be said for or against such a theory, it is not to be found in either ancient or medieval philosophy—while modern direct realism has no truck with the abstractive theory of science.
- (2) The intelligible form might be held to be in the sense organ, but not by way of actual exemplification. Lion would have *existence for sense*, as opposed to *actual existence*, in the impressed sensible form.

Two comments can be made on this suggestion which is to be found, for example, in Brennan's *Thomistic Psychology*, p. 117 (see also pp. 113ff., 135-137; Maritain, *The Degrees of Knowledge*, p. 140).

(a) To speak of the "existence for sense" of a lion when a tawny sensation occurs can at best be a misleading way of pointing out that the process of sense perception involves interpretation or thought in addition to mere sensation. Thus, "existence for sense" when it is opposed to "actual existence" is just a special case of "existence for thought." If this is so, then the "presence" of the intelligible form in a perception can hardly be that from which the thought of the intelligible form is derived, *since it is that thought itself* (albeit on an unreflective level).

(b) Even should it be insisted that "existence for sense" is to be distinguished from both "actual existence" and "existence for thought," the result would merely be that the abstractive theory of thought would be explaining our ability to *think* of something (give it *existence for thought*) in terms of an ability of the same general kind (our ability to give things *existence for sense*) which is taken as ultimate. It is clear that the abstractive theory of thought makes sense only as a theory to the effect that the thought of, say, Triangularity is abstracted from an *actual case* of Triangularity.

34. The conception of natural science as a matter of abstracting intelligible forms from impressed sensible forms is, of course, of merely historical interest. Before we go on to see what has taken its place in recent Thomistic thought, let us consider for a moment what it was that made this conception plausible. First, there is the fact

<sup>19</sup>See, for example, Brennan, *Thomistic Psychology*, pp. 178-184, 189-193.

that the common-sense view of natural objects, which, since it is a crystallization in language and action of funded human experience, seems bodily given to us by our senses, was essentially all there was to the science of the day. *Secondly*, there was the complete neglect of linguistic and, in general, symbolic activities and habits in the interpretation of the facts of thought. *Thirdly*, an anti-Platonistic attitude towards universals, combined with the recognition that thought "deals with universals," led to the abstractive theory of thought. *Fourthly*, the Aristotelians, lacking the concept of a law of nature, had no clear theoretical understanding of a *dispositional property*. They did not distinguish it from the weaker notion of a capacity. Consequently, they fell back on pictorial thinking (*although in many contexts their statements about properties are quite reasonable!*), taking the "potential" to be that which is *implicit* in a thing, and the implicit to be that which is *present* in the thing but "obscured by" or "immersed in" matter. *Fifthly*, instead of thinking of the growth of a living thing (e.g., an acorn) as involving the appearance in an irreversible order of new dispositional properties, and of the nature of a thing as involving the higher order dispositional property of having specified lower order dispositional properties in specified circumstances,<sup>20</sup> the confusions mentioned under "fourthly" led them to think of the nature of a thing as an ideal *state* of the object present in it but obscured by matter and of growth (which was the ultimate model for their conception of all change) as the progressive increase in the "clarity" with which the ideal stands forth. It is in the context of growth that we best understand the Aristotelian identification of matter with potentiality. In general, we must say that the plausibility of the abstractive theory of science rested on the extent to which lack of clarity in the analysis of the nature of a thing was balanced by a lavish use of matter as an objective unclarity of things, as an ontological bog or mire. As soon as the concept of law of nature as a functional correlation of events came on the intellectual scene, the abstractive theory of science was doomed.

35. Among contemporary Scholastics, those who have made a sincere effort to interpret the methods and results of modern science (Jacques Maritain and Mortimer Adler, to mention two whose writings are available in English), while they still insist that it makes sense to speak of grasping the intelligible forms of substances, admit that human beings cannot arrive at the intelligible forms of natural substances by abstraction *from the perceptions of the senses*.<sup>21</sup> They admit that empirical science works rather by the method of *saving the appearances*. But in

<sup>20</sup>"We must... notice that dispositions fall into a hierarchy. A bit of iron which has been put inside a helix in which an electric current circulates acquires the power to attract iron filings.... If we call this magnetic property a 'first-order disposition,' the power to acquire this property when placed in a helix... may be called a 'second-order disposition.'" (Broad, *Examination of McTaggart's Philosophy*, Vol. 1, p. 266.) See also the references listed in note 2 above.

<sup>21</sup>Maritain, *La Philosophie de la nature*, pp. 42, 89-93; Maritain, *The Degrees of Knowledge*, p. 249; Brennan, *op. cit.*, p. 170; Adler, *Solution of the Problem of Species*, pp. 399n, 347n. Adler has apparently not got around to drawing the implications of his remarks in the latter reference. They contain enough dynamite to force a complete revision of his ontology, or epistemology. Is *substantial form* a category in the Kantian sense?

their interpretation of this method they swing to the opposite extreme and make the same mistake as the phenomenologists and positivists.

36. This mistake consists in hanging on to the fundamental thesis of the abstractive theory of thought, as well as to the idea that the data of the senses are the abstractive base of scientific thought, while recognizing that these data do not "contain" substantial forms to be elicited by thought. Thus, these Neo-Thomists regard scientific concepts and propositions as constructions of which the content consists of universals abstracted from the immediate data of the senses, while the rest is a matter of *logical and mathematical structure*. The importance of "merely symbolic thinking," of language as a calculational device, is discovered and emphasized though it is insisted that there is also "real thinking" in which the mind is apprehending universals and meanings.<sup>22</sup> These New Schoolmen, then, agree with the positivists that, from the standpoint of the philosopher, scientific activity consists in the logical and mathematical manipulation of expressions which stand for actual or possible observations ("Red flash seen...", "Arrow-shaped line coincides with dot..."), a manipulation which, when successful, enables us to predict (or postdict) the course of sense experience. Those scientific terms which are neither purely logical nor purely mathematical and do not stand for observable qualities—in short, those terms which the realistic philosopher of science takes to refer to properties of physical systems—are interpreted as *merely calculational devices*, since it is held, in accordance with the abstractive theory of thought, that only those non-logical and non-mathematical terms which name sense qualities name universals at all, *given that only these universals can be abstracted from the experiences which are the raw material of empirical science*.

37. Since, after all, these Neo-Thomists are realists and not positivists or phenomenologists, they are led to distinguish between an angelic science which grasps the intelligible forms of things and human science which builds up, by inductive methods, complex constructions of *practical and predictive value*.<sup>23</sup> Human science, thus, systematizes the appearances beneath which there is a core accessible only to the angels. Scientific laws are not truths about the physical world, but are merely calculational devices for predicting sense-experience. Where the Neo-Thomist does not overlook the fact that properties and, indeed, substantial forms can be defined in the language of empirical science, he is forced to hold that such properties and substantial forms are ontologically bogus, substitutes (with a "foundation" in things) for the "real" article.<sup>24</sup> Since the "real" articles they have in mind are only the common-sense notions of the natures of things, the Neo-Thomists are opposing the crystallizations of pre-scientific experience (which has no privileged source of information and in which time takes the place of method) to the fruits of the system-

<sup>22</sup> Adler, *What Man Has Made of Man*, p. 207; Maritain, *The Degrees of Knowledge*, pp. 77, 168, 216, and *La Philosophie de la nature*, pp. 100, 143.

<sup>23</sup> Maritain, *La Philosophie de la nature*, pp. 75-80, and *The Degrees of Knowledge*, p. 249, also pp. 77, 168, 216

<sup>24</sup> Maritain, *La Philosophie de la nature*, pp. 75, 110, 140-143, and *The Degrees of Knowledge*, pp. 168, 216-217.

atic exploitation of the same material which is empirical science. Or can it be that pre-scientific experience has a privileged source of information? For these philosophers, being uneasy about the extent to which they have trodden the road to phenomenalistic skepticism, hasten to insist that, since "man is of all natural things the one with which man is most intimately acquainted, the only one whose specific nature he is able to comprehend fully," we have in the science of man "the *only* body of philosophical knowledge relevant to a species of physical thing." Here alone can abstractive thought, with ontological as opposed to merely phenomenalistic reach, supplement the constructions of empirical science. Man's nature involves physical, vegetative, and animal levels of being. Thus, while man's knowledge of himself cannot replace empirical science, it abstracts a knowledge of these realms from his own being which, though limited, is not of the substitute sort, and thus transcends the limitations of his senses.<sup>25</sup> So the argument goes; but it is, of course, confusion. Its plausibility rests on man's pre-scientific knowledge of himself, just as the pre-scientific knowledge of the physical world (the presence of which in sense-experience makes this so much more than seeing colors or hearing sounds) made plausible the abstractive theory of physical science. In each case, the fruit of the long process of pre-scientific learning is transmogrified into a bogus process of intuitive abstraction. The confusion is bolstered by the fact that such learning, like "intuitive abstraction," is not a matter of systematic and deliberate saving of appearances.

#### IV

38. Let us now leave the subject of Neo-Thomist attempts to patch up the Aristotelian theory of knowledge and return to an examination of the original theory, this time with a view to its bearing on the mind-body problem. We shall restrict our attention to the distinction, vital to the Aristotelian tradition, between the "active" and the "passive" reason.

39. Before we begin, let us remind ourselves that neither Aristotle nor the Scholastics conceived of soul and body as two changing, interacting substances, as did Plato and Descartes. The Aristotelians define the human soul as the substantial form of the human individual who consists of matter and form as does any terrestrial substance. With qualifications which will be introduced at the proper place, it is the human individual that acts, that does things, and not the soul; just as it is water that freezes, and not the nature of water.

40. Let us also remind ourselves that even should it be necessary (which it is not) to recognize the existence of unique acts of "intellection" which are not explainable

<sup>25</sup> Adler, *What Man Has Made of Man*, p. 187. On the value of pre-scientific experience for philosophy, see Adler's distinction between general and special experience, *op. cit.*, pp. 11, 57, 129, 131, see also Maritain, *La Philosophie de la nature*, pp. 89-93. On the ability of the philosophy of nature to penetrate "behind" phenomena see also Adler, *op. cit.*, pp. 28, 160. But cf. the reference commented on in note 21 above.

in terms of psychological laws relating to linguistic activity, this would not by itself force us to adopt a dualism of mind and organism as separate or separable *things*. The recognition would lead us to expand our list of ultimate features of the world and our list of irreducible laws, and therefore to expand our list of irreducible dispositional properties. But just as we are not led to postulate a new *thing* every time we discover a new property of what we have been taking to be one thing, so the mere recognition of an irreducible set of acts and dispositions relating to thought would not call for a thing-dualism of mind and body.<sup>26</sup> It is only if we could show either that acts of thought are found to occur apart from the acts and dispositions characteristic of biological organisms, or else that they are completely independent of the remaining acts and dispositions of the organism, that we should be justified in arguing either that they belong to a separate thing, or, at least, that they will not be "touched" by the organism's death. The first alternative is that of finding empirical evidence for the existence of disembodied rational spirits. This, of course, can be left in the capable hands of the Psychical Research Society. It is a modified form of the second alternative which we find in Aristotle.

41. Let us now consider certain implications of the abstractive theory of thought, using as an example the proving of a geometrical theorem with the aid of a complex construction. We shall conceive of the process of proof as the successive grasping of ever more intricate relationships between the geometrical universals involved in the proof, a process culminating in the grasping of the proposition to be proved as necessitated by the relationships apprehended in the earlier stages of the proof.

42. We remember that, according to the abstractive theory, one cannot grasp a geometrical universal unless an instance of that universal is present to sense or imagination. Again, one cannot think of a *triangle* unless one is grasping the universal Triangularity. Now, suppose that at a certain stage in the argument the inscription of a circle is required by way of construction. It follows directly from the abstractive theory that *one cannot think of constructing a circle in sense or imagination unless one is already aware of a sensed or imagined circle*. Thus, if we ask, "By what *rational* process is the geometer led to make a new construction?" the answer must surely be, "None." The construction cannot be caused, even in part, by the thought of the construction, *for the thought of the construction presupposes the construction!*

43. We can generalize this implication of the strict form of the abstractive theory,

<sup>26</sup>The traditional mind-body problem is unnecessarily confused by a careless use of the term "interaction." Properly, this term belongs in the *thing*-language and denotes a relation between things or substances. However, it is sometimes used by philosophers in such a way that it means only a causal entanglement of two series of events of fundamentally different kinds. The latter use analytically presupposes "qualitative" dualism, and if mental events are "irreducible," there is interaction in this sense. Usually at this stage the ordinary sense of interaction takes over and, presto chango, our philosopher has a dualism of interacting mental and physical *things*. Whether or not the *thing*-language is anything more than a common-sense dodge, it is important to note that qualitative dualism of events does not, by itself, entail dualism of things. This insight is characteristic of the Aristotelian traditions, as of modern emergentist theories.

It is a necessary consequence of the theory that thought, abstracting the universals which define its subject matter from the data of the senses and imagination, must accept with natural piety what the senses and imagination offer it in the way of material for abstraction. *The coming to have a kind of experience (sense or imagination) cannot have as its cause (in whole or in part) the thought of the kind of experience one comes to have.*

44. We must hasten to qualify the conclusion of the preceding paragraph, for Aristotle, taking a hint from the Socratic Doctrine of Recollection, worked out a most ingenious theory to avoid this consequence of the abstractive theory. Before giving Aristotle's solution of this problem, let us reformulate the difficulty as accurately and completely as possible.

45. According to the abstractive theory of thought, the thought of X cannot be a causal factor in one's coming to experience a case of X, since in order to think of X one must already be experiencing a case of X. If this is the case, then sense and imagination yield material for coherent sequences of thought only *per accidens*. For example, imagination *happens*, owing to causes lying outside the intellect, to provide the series of imaginative constructions which make possible the grasping of ever more complicated relationships between geometrical universals which, according to the Aristotelian, is the process of arriving at a proof.

46. There would seem to be only two ways (within a generally Aristotelian framework) of avoiding this consequence.

47. The first—relatively modern—consists in distinguishing between "symbolic" or "substitute" thinking (which is characterized as a calculational activity of the imagination, a manipulation of symbols according to learned habits) and "real" thinking (which is a matter of grasping relationships between universals and other meanings). I took this approach myself in an earlier rationalistic stage of my philosophical development. Those who argue in this way insist that "merely symbolic" thinking rests on habits learned in connection with "real" thinking, which is abstractive in character. They seek to avoid the objection we have raised against the abstractive theory by claiming that a temporal process of thought is either a sequence of real thinkings for which the orderly flow of abstractive material is controlled by the rational or calculational habits of the imagination, or else is symbolic thinking through and through.

48. Concerning this first theory we limit ourselves to two comments. (1) Those who take this course undercut, as we shall see, the ground on which rests the Aristotelian conception of the active intellect. (2) Once systematic and "rational" processes are recognized which are not apprehendings of universals or other types of meanings, then, even though one insists that such apprehendings must exist as the necessary conditions of the existence of "symbolic" thinking, one is open to a line of refutation which argues that "symbolic" thinking can be empirically accounted for without postulating such apprehendings. I have made it clear that in my opinion such a line of refutation would be successful.

49. The other approach to our difficulty is that taken by Aristotle who, in common

with almost all philosophers up to relatively recent times, overlooked the possibility of a psychology of linguistic activity which would interpret it as something other than a means of "expressing" and communicating "real" thinking. (Actually, "real" thinking is a ghost of "linguistic" thinking which haunts the rationalist.)

50. Aristotle<sup>27</sup> realized that unless thought somehow had a hand in the flow of imagination, the occurrence of *the right image at the right time* which is necessary (on the abstractive theory) for systematic temporal processes of thought would be a mere matter of chance. Unwilling either to admit this or to abandon the abstractive theory and overlooking the possibility of invoking "symbolic" thinking, he had to find some way of reconciling the abstractive theory of discursive thought with his conviction that *thought* as well as hunger, fear, etc., was a causal factor influencing the human imagination. *Somehow we must be thinking of what we are going to think before we think it.* This "prior" thinking (which, in the nature of the case, cannot be the abstractive thinking it is designed to explain) is the active reason or *intellectus agens* (*νοῦς ποιητικός*). The term "prior" is, of course, misleading, since the active intellect is, for Aristotle, a ceaseless activity of knowing all essences and what they involve. It does not change, since it does not first know one thing, then another, but *always all things*. The active reason is a "part" of the soul of each rational being who is capable of a science of the world; but whether there is one active reason for all and how the active reason is related to the forms are questions which Aristotle never answered, or to which his answers have been lost.

51. It is by this conception of the active intellect as a "part" of the human soul that Aristotle is enabled to hold that the flow of our experience is guided by thought—guided *in part*, for clearly thought is not the sole cause of the course of experience; it competes with the appetitive nature of man. It is only by a complete misunderstanding of the requirements of the Aristotelian conception of thought that his active reason has so widely been interpreted as the act of abstracting the universal from the particular.<sup>28</sup> The latter is an essential phase of temporal or passive reason which, "illuminated" by active reason, disengages the universal from the sensuous embodiment which the active reason, by influencing man's imagination in competition with other aspects of his nature, has made available to it. Discursive thought, for Aristotle, is the tenuous product of the impact on the imagination, which man shares with the brutes, of the unchanging and divine activity of pure thought which is the active reason. The latter is, of course, a thinking which is completely independent of sense, imagination, and temporal thought. It is therefore independent of the

<sup>27</sup> *De Anima*, Bk. III, chap 5, see also 413a3-7, 413b24-29 and 429a3-4. The basis in what survives of Aristotle's works for a reconstruction of his distinction between active and passive reason is extremely tenuous, amounting to but a few sentences of explicit discussion. The interpretation which I offer is, I believe, not only compatible with what he does say, and with the analogies from other areas stressed by commentaries, but is a reasonable argument, given his premises. For an account of the evidence as well as of the main lines of interpretation see Ross, *Aristotle*, 2nd ed., pp. 148-153, and E. E. Spicer, *Aristotle's Conception of the Soul* (1934), pp. 103-112.

<sup>28</sup> "Abstraction which is the proper task of the active intellect..." (Brennan, *Thomistic Psychology*, p. 191.) See Ross's comment on this type of mistake on p. 149 of his *Aristotle*.

organism, and is not "touched" by death. It is the immortal "part" of the human soul.

52. As is well known, it is the impersonal immortality of the Aristotelian active reason which the Thomists have converted, under the pressure of Christian Dogma and with the aid of the central confusions of the perennial philosophy, into the immortality of the human soul. Their argument can be tersely analyzed into the following steps:

- (A) Each substance has only one substantial form. This is a direct consequence of the definition of a substantial form since, properly understood, the substantial form of a substance is the unity of all the properties characteristic of that kind of substance. The error of maintaining that one substance can have a plurality of substantial forms comes from noting that higher level substances have properties of a kind which is also to be found in lower level substances—the elephant can slide down the grassy slope—while failing to note that these lower level properties of higher level substances take the form they do as bound up with the higher level properties of these substances. (See paragraphs 7-11 above.) For the Scholastic it follows that it is a confusion to think of higher level substances as including lower level substances.<sup>29</sup> It is said that the substantial forms of higher level substances include the substantial forms of lower level substances "virtually"<sup>30</sup> by including their properties modified to fit their higher estate.
- (B) Thus, the substantial form of a rational animal is a unity which involves all the properties characteristic of human beings.
- (C) But the substantial form of rational animals includes the *intellectus agens* or active reason.
- (D) Now the *intellectus agens* is not just a *property* in virtue of which man does things. It is not, in our terminology, a dispositional property as is, say, vision. *It does things. It knows*<sup>31</sup> and knows in a way which is independent of the organism. Therefore the human soul is not just a unity of properties; *it does something; it knows.*
- (E) Consequently, the human soul is not only the substantial form of the human individual, *it is also a substance*. For that which acts is a substance.
- (F) Since the human soul is a *unity* which is in one aspect immortal, it is

<sup>29</sup> Except potentially. If you kill an elephant, earth, air, fire, and water, which were present in the living elephant only as physical properties, come into existence as substances. I shall not comment on this theory as it would take us too far into the analysis of substantiality and would be irrelevant to the specific confusions involved in the argument for immortality. See Maritain, *The Degrees of Knowledge*, p. 219n.

<sup>30</sup> See Adler, *What Man Has Made of Man*, p. 190.

<sup>31</sup> In so far as the Scholastic attributed to active reason the function of abstracting the universal from its sensuous embodiment, a dispositional property is involved which is essentially bound up with organic existence. This property, and hence the act of abstraction, is therefore more properly attributed to the man than to the *intellectus agens*. The latter should be restricted to the timeless knowing of all natures.

immortal as a whole. Therefore the entire human soul with all its dispositional properties, both original and acquired, is an immortal substance.

Now the crucial step in this argument is step C. Unfortunately it is a mistake. It by no means follows from the fact (granted that it is a fact) that human discursive thought could not occur without the influence of the active reason, that the latter is a *part* of the human soul, any more than it follows from the fact that without the sun the earth would not move in an ellipse, that the sun is a part of the earth. It is only because of the complete misunderstanding of the nature of a thing which we have traced in the course of our argument, that the active reason which (1) is not a dispositional property, and (2) is *ex hypothesi* completely independent of the organism, could be conceived of as "part" of the human substantial form. In general, it is only by pictorial thinking of the crudest sort that one can interpret the unity of a substantial form as other than a functional unity of dispositional properties. Indeed, it must not be just any functional involvement of dispositional properties (for, after all, the nature of gold includes the property of dissolving in *aqua regia*, and the nature of *aqua regia* includes that of dissolving gold) but only that sort of involvement which requires us to say that we are dealing with one thing rather than two. As the Averroists saw, what we have in the case of the human reason (again, we are making the contrary-to-fact assumption that it makes sense to speak of an active reason at all) is two things, one of which, *man*, could not perform certain activities, i.e., think, unless the other, *active reason*, were influencing it (illumination).

53. Another argument from the nature of thought to such an independence of thought from the body as might back up the dogma of the immortality of the soul can be dismissed even more briefly.

54. This time it is argued that the activities of "real" thought cannot be the acts of any organ (specifically, the brain) because universals are present in acts of organs only by way of *actual exemplification*, whereas in thought universals and other objects of intellect have *being for thought* or "intentional being." The argument continues (I quote from Mortimer Adler's *What Man Has Made of Man*, p. 179) as follows:

...(8) Therefore the intellect must receive universal forms. (9) But no form is universal according as it is received in matter. (10) Therefore intellectual reception must be immaterial, which is to say that understanding is not the act of a bodily organ. This last proposition is the capital premise for the conclusion that the soul, having this immaterial mode of operation, must also to that extent have an immaterial mode of being, and hence it is not only the substantial form of the body, but is capable of separate self-subsistence upon the corruption of the composite.

55. Now even granted that there is such a thing as the intellectual reception of universal forms—in short, "real" thinking—and that this notion is not merely the confused echo (due to the mixing of the psychological and the logical approaches

to thought) of symbolizing habits and activities, even granted this, the argument is unsound. Everyone would surely admit that the fact that

*if mechanism in biology be false, acts of organs are not acts of chemical elements*

has not the slightest tendency to show that acts of organs are capable of *separate existence* apart from acts of chemical elements, *in view of the dependence of acts of organs on acts of chemical elements*. The situation is exactly the same with respect to the above argument. It must be granted that "intellectual receptions of universals" are not the acts of any bodily organ, *for they are certainly of a different nature from those acts which we class as acts of organs*. But intentional acts of the understanding (if such there be) are related at least as intimately to the biological activities of the nervous system as these biological activities are related to physicochemical activities. They are unique acts of the *man* who, by performing them, shows himself to be a substance of a higher level than the merely "organic" or biological.

56. The only difference between the case in point and the proposed analogy lies in the pictorial dimension. Our imagery for physical and biological activities is robust and colorful: for "thought" it is pale and bloodless. Thus we tend to think of intellectual activities as present only in a ghostly and tenuous way in the physical and biological turmoil; whereas the dependence of the biological on the physical, though no greater, is depicted in terms of a pictorial involvement more adequate to the dependency. Once childish things are put aside (and pictorial thinking is childish) it is clear that *from difference in kind to capacity for separate existence* it is only possible to argue given lack of dependence. (The virtue of the argument from the active intellect was that there such independence was involved in the very argument which "established" the existence of the active intellect.) But given the degree of dependence of discursive thought on brain activity, with particular emphasis on symbolizing habits which confronts the most casual study of scientific evidence, it is clear that the only acceptable argument for the *possibility* of the separate existence of thought must rest on evidence of the *actual occurrence* of separate thought. ("From actuality to possibility the argument is sound," to quote a Scholastic maxim.)

57. Thus, here again we are thrown back on the Psychical Research Society, unless an examination of the theological and ethical arguments for survival would prove more convincing. But that is beyond the scope of the essay.



## The Philosophical Works of Wilfrid Sellars

This bibliography is the most complete and correct bibliography of Sellars' work as of the date of publication. It contains corrections from Dr. Andrew Chrucky's web site on Sellars: (<http://csmaclab--www.uchicago.edu/philosophyProject/sellars/bib-s.html>).

**Abbreviations:** *APQ* for *American Philosophical Quarterly*; *JP* for *The Journal of Philosophy*; *P&PR* for *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*; *PREV* for *Philosophical Review*; *PSC* for *Philosophy of Science*; *PS* for *Philosophical Studies*; *ROM* for *Review of Metaphysics*.

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| <i>ENWW</i> | 2. "Epistemology and the New Way of Words," <i>JP</i> 44 (1947): 645-60.<br>Reprinted in <i>PPPW</i> (112).  |
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| <i>GQ</i>   | 12. "Gestalt Qualities and the Paradox of Analysis," <i>PS</i> 1 (1950): 92-4.   |
| <i>OM</i>   | 13. "Obligation and Motivation," <i>PS</i> 2 (1951): 21-25.  |
| <i>RP</i>   | 14. "Review of Arthur Pap, <i>Elements of Analytic Philosophy</i> ," <i>P&amp;PR</i> 11 (1950): 104-9.   |
| <i>OMR</i>  | 15. "Obligation and Motivation," in <i>Readings in Ethical Theory</i> , edited   |

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*Additional Works by Wilfrid Sellars* (compiled by P. V. Amaral)

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